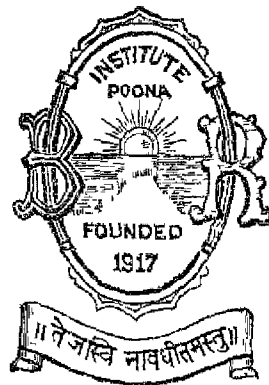


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VAISNAVISM, SAIVISM AND  
MINOR RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS

BY

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# VAISNAVISM, SAIVISM AND MINOR RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS.

## PART I

### VAISNAVISM.

#### I. Introductory.

§ 1. The old Vedic gods became indissolubly involved in the elaborate and mechanical system of worship that had grown up. Speculations as regards the appropriateness of the rules and modes of worship, and their efficacy as regards man's good in this world and the next became prevalent. But all this did not satisfy the religious spirit of the people. Religious speculation of a more natural order came to be established about the close of the Hymn period and was continued into that of the Upanisads. The various problems about God, man and the world, engaged the attention of many thinkers, and a variety of solutions was arrived at. It is generally believed that the Upanisads teach a system of Pantheism but a close examination will show that they teach not one, but various systems of doctrines as regards the nature of God, man and the world and the relations between them. The religio-philosophic systems of modern times, which are mutually inconsistent, quote texts from the Upanisads as an authority for their special doctrines. These references to the old books are correct in the most prominent cases, but when the advocates of the systems force into other texts of an opposite nature a meaning consistent with their own special doctrines, they are manifestly wrong. That the Upanisads teach not one but various systems must follow from the fact that they are compilations just as the Rgveda-Samhitā. The speculations of the old seers were clothed by them in words, and these were handed down orally and came to form a large floating mass. When the idea of collecting these speculations arose, they were incorporated into books for the use of individual Vedic schools. Hence it is that we find certain

verses, passages and whole sections occurring in one Upaniṣad reproduced in another<sup>1</sup>

No doubt, the idea of the immanence of God in the world is very prominent in the Upaniṣads. But if that is what constitutes Pantheism, the liberal religious thought of the present day in Europe also must be regarded as Pantheistic. With the immanence of God is associated his transcendence also, as stated in the Vedānta-Sūtra II. 1. 27<sup>2</sup>. In addition to these two doctrines the Upaniṣads teach that God is the protector of all beings, is the lord of all and dwells in the heart of mān, that seeing him as he is and everywhere is eternal bliss, that this is to be attained by contemplation and the purification of the soul, and that in the blissful condition the individual soul attains to a perfect similarity with the supreme soul<sup>3</sup>. They also teach the absorption of the individual soul into the supreme as of a river into the ocean, and the unconsciousness of the soul when everything but himself fades away from his knowledge. In this respect the doctrine may be regarded as Pantheistic or as setting forth the illusory character of all phenomena. Speculation in the Upaniṣad times was very free, and it veered round even to the denial of the soul as a substance.<sup>4</sup>

In the subsequent development of religious thought and worship these Upaniṣad doctrines played an active part. The Heno-

1 See the passage about the superiority of prāṇa and other bodily elements which occurs in ChU. (V 1. 1.) and in BU. (VI. 1. 1), that about the Pañcāgnividyā occurring in the former (V 4. 1) and the latter (VI 2. 9), and that about proud Bālāki and Ajātaśatru which occurs in the KBU. (IV) and BU. (II. 1), and others (TU II. 8 and BU IV. 3. 33). As to the recurrence of verses see MU Sū. and KU

2 See the passage quoted by Śaṅkaradeśika in his commentary on the Sūtra.

3 Paramam sāmyam upaiti. See MU, III. 1. 3. The opinion expressed by some eminent scholars that the burden of the Upaniṣad teaching is the illusive character of the world and the reality of one soul only is manifestly wrong, and I may even say, is indicative of an uncritical judgment. As stated in the text, the Upaniṣads from the very nature of the compilations cannot but be expected to teach not one, but many systems of doctrine.

4 See the passage from BU. III 2. 13, quoted in my paper "A Peep into the Early History of India", JBRRAS. Vol XX, p. 361. [= Vol. I p 7 of this Edition—N B C.]

theism, so fully explained by Max Müller, and its ultimate result, the identification of the various gods, also influenced later thinkers. The conception that the supreme spirit manifests himself in various forms which we find expressed in the Upanisads is a development, in the opposite direction, of the idea that one God, for instance Agni, is the same as Varuna, Mitra, Indra and Aryaman.<sup>1</sup> If these several gods are one, one god may become several. This led to the conception of Incarnations or Avatāras, which plays such a prominent part in the later religious systems.

But for ordinary people, an adorable object, with a more distinct personality than that which the theistic portions of the Upanisads attributed to God, was necessary and the philosophic speculations did not answer practical needs. Thus some of the old Vedic gods and others, which were new, became the objects of worship.

## **II The Rise of a New Theistic System.**

§ 2 The tide of free speculations culminated in the east into such systems as those of Buddhism and Jainism and though they denied the existence of God as a creator, or did not use the idea for the promotion of righteousness, and the former practically denied the existence of the human soul as a substance, still, these systems had the needful personal element in the shape of their founders. In the west, however, a theistic system with a god who had come to dwell among men arose. The various religious systems and superstitions that prevailed in the fourth century B. C. are given in the following passage, occurring in the Niddesa, which though of the nature of a commentary is regarded as one of the books of the Pali Buddhist Canon<sup>2</sup>: "The deity of the lay followers of the Ājivakas is the Ājivakas, of those of the Nighanthas is the Nighanthas, of those of the Jatilas (ascetics wearing long matted hair) is the Jatilas, of those of the Paribbājakas is the Paribbājakas, of those of the Avaruddhakas, is the Avaruddhakas, and the deity of those who are devoted to an elephant, a horse, a cow, a dog, a crow, Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Punnabhadda, Manibhadda, Aggi, Nāgas, Supannas, Yakkhas.

1 RV. V.1-2.

2 This passage has been furnished to me by Mr. Dharmanand Kosambi.

Asuras, Gandhabbas, Mahārājās, Canda, Suriya, Inda, Brahmā, Deva, Disā is the elephant, the horse, the cow, the dog, the crow, Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Punnabhadda, Manibhadda, etc, respectively.

Here a Buddhist, who cannot but be expected to show scant courtesy to religious systems other than his own, places the worshippers of Vāsudeva and Baladeva on the same level with those of fire, moon, sun and Brahmā, and even elephants, crows, dogs, etc. But the worship of Vāsudeva was destined to become the predominant religion of a large part of India even to the supersession of that of fire, sun, moon, and Brahmā and, of course, of the superstitious adoration of the lower animals. And it will be now our duty to trace its rise and progress

§ 3 In his comment on Pāṇini IV 3 98 Patañjali distinctly states that the Vāsudeva contained in the Sūtra is the name of the "worshipful", i. e., of one who is pre-eminently worshipful, i. e., God. The worship of Vāsudeva must be regarded to be as old as Pāṇini.

In an Inscription found at Ghosundi in Rājputāna<sup>1</sup>, which unfortunately is in a mutilated condition, the construction of a wall round the hall of worship of Samkarsana and Vāsudeva is mentioned. From the form of the characters in the Inscription it appears to have been engraved at least two hundred years B. C.

In another Inscription recently discovered at Besnagar<sup>2</sup>, Heliodora represents himself to have erected a Garudadhvaja or a column with the image of Garuda at the top in honour of Vāsudeva, the god of gods. Heliodora calls himself a Bhāgavata, was the son of Diya, was a native of Taksasilā and is spoken of as an ambassador of the Yavana and as such came on a political mission from Amtalikita to Bhāgabhadra, who must have ruled over Eastern Mālwa. In this Inscription occurs the name Amtalikita which in all likelihood is the same as Antialkidas of the Bactro-Greek coins. This name as well as the form of the characters show that it belongs to the earlier part of the second century before the

<sup>1</sup> See JRAS, 1910 p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Linders, List of Brāhmī Inscriptions, No. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, No. 669.

Christian era. At that time Vāsudeva was worshipped as the god of gods and his worshippers were called Bhāgavatas. The Bhāgavata religion prevailed in the northwestern part of India and was adopted even by the Greeks.

In the Inscription No 1 in the large cave at Nānāghaṭ<sup>1</sup>, the names of Samkarsana and Vāsudeva, in a Dvandva compound, occur along with those of other deities in the opening invocation. This Inscription appears from the form of the characters to belong to the first century before the Christian era.

In the passage in the Mahābhāṣya in which Patañjali, to account for the appearance of the name Vāsudeva in Pāṇini IV. 3. 98, says that this is not the name of a Kṣatriya, but that of the Worshipful One, the question to be considered is whether Patañjali means this Vāsudeva to be quite unconnected with the Vāsudeva of the Vrsni race. From the occurrence of the names Vāsudeva and Baladeva close to each other in the passage from the Niddesa referred to above, and that of Samkarsana and Vāsudeva as worshipful or divine persons in a Dvandva compound in two of three above Inscriptions, it appears that the Vāsudeva referred to by Patañjali as the Worshipful One must be the Vāsudeva of the Vrsni race. But to account for the appearance of the name in the Sūtra, though the required form can be made up in accordance with the next Sūtra (Pāṇini, IV 3. 99), Patañjali says that Pāṇini looks at Vāsudeva in his capacity as a divine person and not as a Kṣatriya. One must take it in this sense, since the Ghosundi Inscription noticed above, in which Samkarsana and Vāsudeva are associated as worshipful persons, must be older than Patañjali himself. Besides, Patañjali begins the discussion of the Sūtra by first taking Vāsudeva as the name of a Kṣatriya and raising an objection against it. This objection is answered in one way, Vāsudeva being still regarded as a Kṣatriya, and it is only optionally that he gives another explanation, that that name is not the name of a Kṣatriya, but of a divine person. This optional explanation given in the last resort must, therefore, be understood in the sense given above. And from all the accounts of the Bhāgavata school contained in the whole literature it is clear that the worshipful Vāsudeva belonged to the Vrsni race.

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1 Ibid, No. 1112.

### III. Analysis of the Nārāyaṇya Section of the Mahābhārata.

§ 4. Having thus established on irrefragable evidence the existence during the three or four centuries before Christ of a religion with Vāsudeva as its central figure, and of a school of his followers, known by the name of Bhāgavata, I will now proceed to examine the detailed accounts contained in the literature and especially in the Mahābhārata. This was not done before, because the date of the Mahābhārata or any portion of it cannot be ascertained with any approach to certainty. The Nārāyaṇya section of the Śāntiparvan, to which we shall devote a detailed consideration, is, however, older than Śaṅkarācārya, who quotes from it.

Nārada is represented to have gone to the Badarikāśrama to see Nara and Nārāyaṇa. The latter was engaged in the performance of religious rites. Nārada asked Nārāyaṇa whom he worshipped, while he himself was the Supreme Lord. Nārāyaṇa told him that he worshipped his original Prakṛti (form), the source of all that is and that is to be. Nara and Nārāyaṇa as well as Kṛṣṇa and Hari, sons of Dharma, are represented as the four forms of the Supreme.

Nārada flies into the sky to see that original Prakṛti and alights on a peak of Meru. There he saw white men without sense, not eating anything, sinless, with heads like umbrellas, making a sound like that of thundering clouds and devoted to Bhagavat. Then Yudhiṣṭhira asked Bhīṣma who those people were, and how they came to be what they were. Bhīṣma tells the story of the king Vasu Uparicara, who worshipped God according to the Sātvata Vidhi (form of ritual). He was a glorious king honoured by Indra, devoted to truth and holy. The best of the learned in the Pāñcarātra system were honoured with the first seat at dinner by him.

The narrator then proceeds to mention the Citrasikhandins, who appear to be the original promulgators of this religion. The mountain Meru was the place where they revealed it. They were seven, consisting of Marīci, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha,

Kratu and Vasistha. The eighth was Svāyambhuva. From these eight, emanated this excellent Śāstra. This they promulgated in the presence of the great Bhagavt, who said to the Ṛsis " You have composed a hundred thousand excellent Ślokas ( stanzas ), which contain rules for all the affairs of men and are in harmony with Yajus, Sāman, R̥c, and Atharvāṅgiras, and lay down precepts about the religion of action as well as that of contemplation or repose. I created Brahman from my peaceful and Rudra from my wrathful nature. This Śāstra will be handed down from person to person until it reaches Brhaspati. From Brhaspati the king Vasu will obtain it. The king will follow this Śāstra and will become my devotee. After his death this Śāstra will be lost." Telling all this the great god disappeared. Then the Citrasīkhandins spread the religion until it reached Brhaspati.

Then the old Kalpa having ended and the son of Angiras, the priest of the gods, being born, the gods were happy. The king Vasu Uparicara was his first pupil. He learned this Śāstra from Brhaspati. At one time he brought forward an extensive horse-sacrifice, but no animal was killed on the occasion. The oblations were devised in accordance with the words of the Āranyakas. The god of gods showed himself to Vasu and accepted his oblation, but was unseen by anybody else. Since the oblation was taken away by Hari without showing himself to Brhaspati, the latter got angry and dashed upwards the sacrificial ladle. At that sacrifice Ekata, Dvīta, and Trita, sons of Prajāpati, and sixteen Ṛsis, many of whom are now known as the authors of literary works, such as Medhātithi, Tittiri, and Tāndya, are represented to have been present.

When Brhaspati was angry, they all said that the great Hari was not to be seen by any man at random, but by one who was favoured by his grace. Ekata, Dvīta and Trita said: " On one occasion we went to the north for the attainment of eternal bliss near the Milky Ocean, and practised austerities for four thousand years and at the end a voice in the air declared ' Well, how can you see that great Lord? In the Milky Ocean there is a White Island where there are men possessing the lustre of the moon, who are the devotees of the God, possess no senses, do not eat anything and, being devoted solely to the god ( Ekāntin or monotheistic ), are absorbed in him, who is bright like the sun. Go to

that island, there shines my soul'. Accordingly we went to the white island, and, dazzled by the light of that being, were not able to see him. Then the truth flashed upon us that the god cannot be seen by us unless we have gone through austerities. After further austerities for a hundred years we saw the men of the lustre of the moon with their minds fully absorbed in the contemplation of God. The refulgence of each man was like that of the sun on the last day. Then we heard a sound : ' Jitam te Puṇḍarikākṣa ' etc.— ( 'Triumphant art thou, Lotus-eyed one ! ). A short time after, a voice in the air declared : ' Go you away as you came. That great being is not to be seen by one who is not devoted to him'. Then we returned without being able to see him. How then will you be able to see him ? " Having heard this from Ekata, Dvita and Trita, Brhaspati finished the sacrifice.

Vasu Uparicara had to live in a hole in the earth on account of the curse of the Rsis, who in a controversy with the gods maintained that no animal should be sacrificed, but only vegetable grain, while the gods contended that a goat should be sacrificed. The question was referred to Vasu who declared in favour of the gods. Vasu was raised from the hole by Nārāyaṇa, whom he had devotedly worshipped, by sending his Garuḍa to lift him up. He was thence taken to the Brahma world.

The story of Nārada's visit to Svetadvīpa is then continued. He praises the great Being by uttering names expressive of his purity and grandeur, and the great Being then manifested himself to him saying that he was not to be seen by one who was not solely devoted to him ( Ekāntin ), and that, as Nārada was such a one, he showed himself to him. He then proceeds to explain to him the religion of Vasudeva. Vāsudeva is the supreme soul, the internal soul of all souls. He is the supreme creator. All-living beings are represented by Samkarsana, who is a form of Vasudeva. From Samkarsana sprang Pradyumna, the mind, and from Pradyumna Aniruddha, self-consciousness. " Those who are devoted to me enter into me and are released. " The great being calls the four mentioned above his forms ( Murtis ). The production of one form from another is also mentioned, all these forms are, however, styled his forms ( Murtis ). He then proceeds to mention the creation of gods and all other things by himself and their final

dissolution into himself. Then are mentioned his incarnations (Avatāras), viz. Varāha, Naraśuṃha, the oppressor of Bali, Rāma of the Bhṛgu race and destroyer of the Kṣatriyas, Rāma Dāśarathī, and "he, who will come into existence for the destruction of Kamsa at Mathurā and after having killed many demons will finally settle at Dvārakā" In this manner having done all things by his four Mūrtis, he destroyed Dvārakā with the Sātvatas and went to Brahmaloka. After Nārada had heard this from the supreme Nārāyaṇa, he returned to Badarikāśrama.

What follows at the end of chapter 339 and in the next four chapters has little bearing on our subject, except that in one of them the etymological sense of Vāsudeva is given as one who covers the whole world and is the resting-place (Adhivāsa) of all beings.

In chapter 344 the path of those who are free from sin is given thus:—The sun is the gate, and after entrance all their material impurities being burnt, they remain as atoms in him; then released from him, they enter into the Aniruddha form, and becoming mind, enter into the Pradyumna form. Leaving that form, they enter into that of Saṃkarsana, i. e., the form of the individual soul (Jīva). Afterwards being free from the three Guṇas, they enter into the Supreme Soul, who exists everywhere and who is Vāsudeva.

In chapter 346 Vaiṣampāyana relates to Janamejaya that the Dharma which Nārada got from 'the Lord of the world', Nārāyaṇa himself, in all its details and peculiarities, was explained briefly to him (Janamejaya) in the Harigītā. In chapter 348 this Ekāntika Dharma is represented to be the same as that which was communicated to Arjuna at the beginning of the war. At the creation of each Brahmā, this Dharma was revealed by Nārāyaṇa, and then at the end of the Brahmā it was lost. In the account of the fourth Brahmā the Dharma revealed is twice called Sātvata. In this manner it goes on up to the present or the seventh Brahmā, in which that Dharma was first communicated to Pitāmaha, and from him it passed in succession to Dakṣa, his grandson, the eldest Āditya, Vivasvat, Manu and Ikṣvāku. Later on it is stated that this original great eternal Dharma, difficult to be known and to be followed, is professed by the Sātvatas.

This Dharma is associated with the non-slaughter of animals (Ahimsā), and when properly exercised, the lord Hari is pleased with it. Sometimes one Vyūha or form of the Lord is taught and sometimes two, three or four. Vaisampāyana winds up by saying that he has thus explained the Ekāntadharma.

§ 5 Here we have two accounts, the second of which is interwoven with the first. The former, however, appears to relate to a more ancient condition of things. The points to be noticed are these: 1. At the sacrifice instituted by Vasu Uparicara no animals were killed. 2. The oblations were devised in accordance with the teachings of the Āraṇyakas which include the Upaniśads. 3. The chief deity was the God of gods, who is also called Hari. 4. This Hari or God of gods is not to be seen by one who follows the sacrificial mode of worship, such as Bṛhaspati did, nor by persons who practise austerities for thousands of years, as Ekata, Dvita and Tṛta did, but by one who worships Him with devotion as Vasu Uparicara did.

Here then is an attempt to introduce a religious reform on more conservative principles than Buddhism and Jainism did. The repudiation of the slaughter of animals and the inefficacy of sacrificial worship and austerities are common to this religious reform with Buddhism. But that the supreme lord Hari is to be worshipped with devotion, and the words of the Āraṇyakas are not to be rejected, are doctrines which are peculiar to it. Vasu Uparicara's story goes so far only.

In the main account, according to which Nārada visited the White Island, we have a re-assertion of the doctrine that the Supreme Soul can be seen by one who worships him with devotion. The great Nārāyaṇa manifests himself to him and explains the religion of Vāsudeva and his three other forms (Vyūhas). He also mentions the future incarnations of Vāsudeva, and one of these is that assumed at Mathurā for the destruction of Kāṁsa. The Supreme Nārāyaṇa identifies himself with Vāsudeva in his four forms (Vyūhas). At the end it is stated that the religion is followed by the Sātvatas.

These two accounts seem to represent two stages in the progress of reform. In the earlier one the worship of Vāsudeva and

his three other forms is not known. The Supreme God is named Hari, and his worship has not thoroughly emancipated itself from the religion of sacrifices. The reform had no reference to specific historical personages and was promulgated by certain sages who are called Citrasikhandins and whose names had been handed down by tradition. The later account connects the reform with Vāsudeva and his brother, son and grandson, and the new religion is represented to have been identical with that taught in the Bhagavadgītā. This reformed system is said to have been promulgated by Nārāyaṇa himself.

It thus appears that the idea of a religion of devotion arose in earlier times, but it received a definite shape when Vāsudeva revealed the Gītā to Arjuna, and led to the formation of an independent sect, when his brother, son and grandson were associated with him as his forms presiding over certain psychological categories, or as persons created by him for the purpose. That sect became conterminous with the race of the Sātvatas. We have now to consider who these Sātvatas were.

#### IV. The Sātvatas and their Religion.

§ 6. In the Ādiparvan, Vāsudeva addressing the Vṛṣṇis says that Fārtha does not think them who are Sātvatas to be covetous. Vāsudeva is called Sātvata in Ādip. 218. 12; Kṛṣṇa in Ādip. 211. 31; Sātyaki in Dronap. 97. 36; and Janārdana in Udyogap. 70. 7. At the end of chap. 66 of the Bhīṣmaparvan, Bhīṣma says, "This eternal god, mysterious, beneficent and loving should be known as Vāsudeva, and Brāhmanas, Kṣātrīyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras worship him by their devoted actions. At the end of the Dvāpara and the beginning of the Kali age, he was sung or expounded by Saṁkarsana according to the Sātvata rites (Vidhi).

At the end of chap. 12 of the third book of the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa it is stated in the account of the genealogy of the Yādavas and the Vṛṣṇis that Satvata was the son of Amśa, and all his descendants were after him called Sātvatas. The Bhāgavata represents the Sātvatas as calling the highest Brahman Bhagavat and Vāsudeva (IX. 9. 49), and having a peculiar mode of worshipping him. It mentions the Sātvatas along with the Andhakas and Vṛṣṇis, which were Yādava tribes (I. 14. 25; III. 1. 29), and calls Vāsudeva, Sātvataśabha (X. 58. 42; XI. 27. 5).

In Patañjali under Pāṇini IV 1. 114, Vāsudeva and Bāladeva are given as derivatives from Vṛṣṇi names in the sense of sons of Vāsudeva and Baladeva. Instances given by the Kāśikā of the same are Vāsudeva and Āniruddha. Here Āniruddha means the son of Aniruddha, and therefore Vāsudeva must mean the son of Vāsudeva and not of Vasudeva, as will appear from what follows. In the latter work under Pāṇini VI. 2. 34, Sini-Vāsudevāḥ is given as a Dvandva of royal Vṛṣṇi names, each of them being in the plural, and Samkarsana-Vāsudevau as a Dvandva of royal Vṛṣṇi names, each being in the singular, so that Vāsudeva means both the individual of that name and his sons.

From all this and such other passages from Patañjali it will appear that Sātvata was another name of the Vṛṣṇi race of which Vāsudeva, Samkarsana, and Aniruddha were members, and that the Sātvatas had a religion of their own according to which Vāsudeva was worshipped as the Supreme Being, and thus the account given above from the Nārāyaṇīya is amply confirmed.

§ 7. It therefore appears that this religion of devotion to Vāsudeva ascends as high into antiquity as Pāṇini himself. As I have mentioned elsewhere, the Kṣatriyas engaged themselves in active speculations on religious matters about the time of the Upaniṣads,<sup>1</sup> and are mentioned even as the original possessors of the new knowledge. Siddhārtha and Mahāvira founded in this period of intellectual fermentation new systems of religion in the east or the Magadha country, which discarded or passed over in silence the doctrine of the existence even of God and laid down self-abnegation and a course of strict moral conduct as the way to salvation. They belonged to the Śākya and Jñātrika races of Kṣatriyas, and Buddhism and Jainism might be considered to be the religions of those tribes. The west, however, was not so radical in its speculations, and the race of Sātvatas developed a system of religion which took up the ideas of a Supreme God and devotion to him as the mode of salvation.

These Sātvatas and the worship of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa seem clearly to be alluded to by Megasthenes, who was the Macedonian

<sup>1</sup> Verhandlungen des VII. Internat. Orientalisten-Congresses zu Wien, Ar. Sect., pp 108-9. [This article is included in Vol I of this Edition.—N.B.U.]

ambassador at the court of Candragupta, the Maurya Candragupta reigned in the last quarter of the fourth century B C. The statement of Megasthenes is that Herakles was specially worshipped by the Sourasenoi, an Indian nation, in whose land are two great cities, Methora and Kleisobora, and through it flows the navigable river Jobares. The Sourasenoi were the Sūrasenas, a tribe of Kṣatriyas, who lived in the region in which was situated Mathurā, corresponding to Methora in the above passage, and in which flowed the river Jobares, which has been identified with the Jūmna or Yamunā. If the Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa worship prevailed in the time of the first Maurya, it must have originated long before the establishment of the Maurya dynasty, and my assertion that it owes its origin to the stream of thought, which began with the Upanisads and culminated in the east in Buddhism and Jainism, and arose about the time of the latter, is confirmed.

The name expressive of the Supreme Spirit was, however, in the early period Vāsudeva alone. In the passage from the Niddesa and the three Inscriptions Vāsudeva is the name that occurs.

In the Bhāgavadgītā (VII. 9) it is stated that "He who possesses knowledge gives himself up to me, believing Vāsudeva to be all." Even in the Bhāgavata Mantra of twelve syllables which is usually repeated at the present day and which is mentioned by Hemādri, it is to Vāsudeva that oblation is made.<sup>1</sup> In Bhīṣmap. chap. 65 Brahmadeva, addressing the Supreme spirit (Puruṣa Paramēśvara), entreats him to become the increaser of the Yadu race, and then, referring apparently to a foregone age, he says: O Vāsudeva ! this great secret I have communicated to thee through thy favour as it really is. Having created thyself as the God Saṅkarsana, thou didst procreate thy son Pradyumna. He created Aniruddha who is Viṣṇu himself, and he created me (Brahmadeva), who am made up of Vāsudeva and created by thee. Dividing thyself in this way be born as a human being, again." In the beginning of chapter 66 of the same Parvan, Prajapati speaks of himself as having asked the supreme lord of all to dwell in the world of men as Vāsudeva (to become incarnate). The Supreme Spirit should, it is said,

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1. Vratakāṇḍa. Bibl. Ind.) p. 325 The Mantra is Om namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya

be known as Vāsudeva, and throughout the chapter that name alone is used in speaking of the eternal God.

The substance of these two chapters seems to be that in a former age the Supreme Spirit Vāsudeva created Sankarṣana and the rest up to the Brahmā himself, and on the present occasion the latter asked him again to be born in the Yadu race as Vāsudeva, dividing himself into four parts as on the previous occasion. Thus Vāsudeva was the name of the teacher of the religion of devotion, and there appears to be an implication here that he existed with the other three in a previous age. Even as a member of the Vṛṣṇa race the name Vāsudeva occurs in the examples quoted above from the Mahābhāṣya and Kāśikā and no other.

In the passages quoted by me in my article<sup>1</sup> on 'Allusions to Kṛṣṇa etc.,' the name Kṛṣṇa occurs three times, Vāsudeva in three passages and Janārdana in one. But in Kielhorn's Edition of the Mahābhāṣya, which is more accurate than the Benares edition which I then used, the reading Kṛṣṇa in two of the three places is supported by one Manuscript only; Vāsudeva occurs instead of Kṛṣṇa in one of the two places and the other is entirely omitted, so that Vāsudeva is used four times and Kṛṣṇa only once. In the Bhāgavadgītā (X 37) the Bhāgavat says that of the Vṛṣṇis he is Vāsudeva.

In the Buddhist Ghatajātaka the two eldest sons of Upasāgara and Devagabbhā are named Vāsudeva and Baladeva. In the prose narrative no other name is given, but the names Kanha and Keśava occur in the verses that are interwoven with the prose. The commentator remarks on the first verse that he is there addressed by his Gotra name Kanha, for he belonged to the Kanhāyana Gotra, thus showing his belief that Vāsudeva was the true proper name of the person. This belief he expresses again in his commentary on a verse occurring in the Mahā-maggajātaka, in which Jambāvātī is mentioned as the beloved queen of Vāsudeva Kanha. Here also Vāsudeva is mentioned as belonging to the Kanhāyana Gotra, and from the verse itself, in which Vāsudevassa Kanhassa occurs, it would appear that Kanha

1. Ind. And., Vol. III, pp. 14 ff. [This article is included in Vol. I of this Edition.—N. B. U.]

was the family name, the sense being Vāsudeva, the Kṛṣṇa, so that the author of the verse itself would seem to regard Vāsudeva as the proper name of the individual, and thus he and the prose narrative agree

§ 8 Thus then Vāsudeva appears to be a proper name and not a patronymic, and when the Vāsudeva religion or the Bhāgavata school took its rise, that was the name by which the Supreme Deity was known. The conception of Vasudeva as his father must have arisen afterwards, as appears to me from the example Vāsudevah given in the Mahābhāṣya in the sense of "son or descendant of Vāsudeva", and not "of Vasudeva", as must be inferred from the analogous instance of Baladeva from Baladeva. Baladeva was associated with Vāsudeva and not with Vasudeva.

Kṛṣṇa, Janārdana, and Keśava do not appear to be Vṛṣṇi names and were given to Vāsudeva in subsequent times when his worship had widely spread. All these three occur in Patañjali also, but the two latter only once so far as I know. But of these the name Kṛṣṇa is more important than the other two and many others that are used. It appears to be as much a proper name as Vāsudeva, though the latter has a religious signification specially attached to it. How then did this name Kṛṣṇa come to be used? It was the name of one of the Vedic Rsis, the composer of hymn 74 of the eighth Mandala. He speaks of himself as Kṛṣṇa in verses 3 and 4 of the hymn. The author of Anukramaṇī calls him an Āṅgīrasa or descendant of Āṅgīrasa. In the KB (XXX. 9) apparently the same Kṛṣṇa Āṅgīrasa is alluded to and is represented to have 'seen' the evening libation in its connection with the Brāhmanācchamsin priest. Kṛṣṇa occurs in a Gāna attached to Pāṇini, IV. 1. 96. In the Gāna connected with Pāṇini IV. 1. 99 Kṛṣṇa and Rāṇa are represented to form the Gotra names Kāṛṣṇāyana and Rāṇāyana, these mere Brahmana Gotras falling under the group of Vāsisthas. The former is the Gotra alluded to by the commentator on the verses in the Jātakaś noticed above. But he apparently does not confine it to the Brahmana class. Then the name Kṛṣṇa as the son of Devakī occurs in the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad (III. 17). He was the pupil of Ghora, who was an Āṅgīrasa. If Kṛṣṇa was also an Āṅgīrasa, which is not improbable, it must be inferred that there was a tradition about Kṛṣṇa

as a sage from the time of the R̥gvedic hymns to the time of the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad, and about a Gotra of the name of Kārṇa-yana, which literally means collection of Kṛṇas, of which the original Kṛṇa was the founder. This tradition gave rise to the identification of the sage Kṛṇa with Vasudeva, when he was raised to the rank of the supreme deity. Just as the name Janamejaya, the son of Parikṣit, which occurs in the AB., was in subsequent times used as the name of the person to whom the Mahābhārata was narrated, and a genealogy was given to him from Arjuna, the Pāṇḍava, so it is possible that Vasudeva was identified with the sage Kṛṇa and a genealogy given to him in the Vṛṣṇi race through Śūra and Vasudeva.

Perhaps the best explanation of the fact of Vāsudeva having been called Kṛṇa is that given by the commentator of the Gāthās or verses of the Jātakas, supported, as it appears to me, by the author of the Gāthās himself, that Kṛṇa was a Gotra name. The Gotra Kārṣṇāyana which corresponds to Kāṇhayana is not only mentioned as a Brāhmana Gotra belonging to the Vasiṣṭha group in the Gaps alluded to above, but is stated to have belonged to the Pārāśara subdivision of that group in the Maṭhyaurāṇa, ch. 200<sup>1</sup>. Though this was a Brāhmana and Pārāśara Gotra, it could be assumed for sacrificial purposes by a Kṣatriya, for according to Āśvalāyana (Śr. S. XII. 13) the Gotra and the ancestors invoked of the Kṣatriyas are those of their priests or chaplains, and the only R̥ṣi ancestors that all the Kṣatriyas have, are Mānava, Aila and Paurāṇavaśa. The names of these do not distinguish one Kṣatriya family from another, and, to answer the purposes of such a distinction, the Gotra and ancestors of the priest are assumed. Vāsudeva therefore belonged to the Kārṣṇāyana Gotra, though it was a Brāhmana and Pārāśara Gotra, and as belonging to this Gotra he could be called Kṛṇa by name. Having come to be known by that name, all the traditions about the learning and spiritual insight of the old Kṛṇa, and also of his being the son of Devakī were engrafted on him, and thus in the Sabhāparvan 38, Bhīṣma says that one of the two reasons for giving the highest honours to Kṛṇa was that he possessed the knowledge of the Vedas and dependent treatises (Vedāṅgas), and that he was also a sacrificial priest (Ītvij). The Hindu habit of

1 Quoted also in Paruṣottama's Pravaramāṇam, Mysore, edition.

thought of identifying one god with others by regarding the latter either as forms or incarnations of the former, and thus evolving monotheism out of polytheism, led to the identification of this Vāsudeva with other gods and with the boy Kṛṣṇa of Gokula. These we will notice later on.

§ 9. In the Nārāyaṇīya we have an explanation of the Bhāgavata or Pāñcarātra system. This system also we will notice in its ripened form later. In the meanwhile we will turn our attention to the statement that the Ekāntika-Dharma founded by Vāsudeva has been explained in the Harigītā and on the occasion when the armies of the Kuruṣ and the Pāṇḍavas stood face to face and Arjuna lost heart.\* The allusion is of course to the Bhagavadgītā.

This passage is noticed in the Bhaktisūtra (83) and its commentary, in which it is stated that Ekāntabhāva (which is the subject of the Nārāyaṇīya), or devotion to one only, is Bhakti alone, since the former is recognised in that passage as identical with the main topic of the Bhagavadgītā. But the Bhagavadgītā contains no allusion to the Vyūhas or forms of the Supreme, Saṁkarṣaṇa and others, while the latter form a characteristic of the Bhāgavata school. The Gītā, however, mentions as the Prakṛtis of Vāsudeva the five elements, the mind, Buddhi or knowledge, and egoism as well as Jīva (VII. 4, 5). The last is identified with Saṁkarṣaṇa in the Bhāgavata system, egoism with Aniruddha, and mind, with which probably Buddhi is associated, with Pradyumna.

What appears to be the fact is this: The Bhagavadgītā was composed before the doctrines of the Bhāgavata school were reduced to a system, and it was then that the three of the Prakṛtis of the Supreme were personified into Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, who were members of the family of Vāsudeva. In the prevalent worship, however, Saṁkarṣaṇa alone is found associated with Vāsudeva in early times, as is seen from the Inscriptions, and the passage from the Niddesa noticed in the beginning.<sup>1</sup> Patañjali also notices, under Pāṇini II. 2. 34, a verse in which it is stated that certain musical instruments are sounded in a gathering in the temple of Dhanapati, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

<sup>1</sup> Antecp. 3. [N. B. U.]

<sup>2</sup> [R. G. Bhandarkar's Works, Vol. IV.]

Here Rāma and Keśava are Balarāma and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, and it is clear that there were festive gatherings at their temples in Patañjali's time. If the passage in Patañjali under Pāṇini VI § 6, "Janārdana with himself as the fourth", i. e. with three companions, may be taken to allude to the three Vyūhas, then it must be understood that the four Vyūhas, Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, were known in Patañjali's time. Still it is doubtful, and it may be taken for granted that the two Vyūhas, Vāsudeva and Saṃkarṣana only were known up to the time of the latest Inscription which is to be referred to about the beginning of the first century before the Christian era, so that the system of four Vyūhas was not fully developed up to that time.

If this reasoning is correct, it will be seen that the date of the Bhagavadgītā which contains no mention of the Vyūhas, or personified forms, is much earlier than those of the Inscriptions, the Niddesa and Patañjali, i. e., it was composed not later than the beginning of the fourth century before the Christian era. How much earlier it is difficult to say. At the time when the Gītā was conceived and composed, the identification of Vāsudeva with Nārāyaṇa had not taken place, nor had his being an incarnation of Viṣṇu come to be acknowledged, as appears from the work itself. When his Virāj or universe-form was shown to Arjuna, as represented in the eleventh chapter, he is twice addressed by the latter as Viṣṇu on account of his dazzling brilliance, which rendered everything hot, and filled the whole universe. Here Viṣṇu is alluded to as the chief of the Ādityas and not as the supreme being, and Vāsudeva was Viṣṇu in this sense, as mentioned in chapter 10, because the best thing of a group or class is represented to be his Vibhūti or special manifestation.

§ 10. A characteristic of a new system of religion that comes into vogue is, that the followers are not satisfied with the idea, that the person known as the founder originated the system. They push back the origin by many ages. Siddhārthaka was preceded by many Buddhas, so was Mhāvira by many Tirthankaras. So in the case of the Bhāgavata school we have seen that that system was taught by Nārāyaṇa at the beginning of each Brahman, and

in the existing Brahman it was first taught to Pitāmaha or Prajāpati and thence it passed to Dakṣa, Vivasvat, Manu and Ikṣvāku. This last order of its revelation is alluded to at the beginning of the fourth chapter of the Gītā, which confirms the tradition noticed in the Nārāyaṇīya about the identity of the religion of the Gītā with the Ekāntika religion revealed by Nārāyaṇa. In this respect of pushing back the origin the Bhāgavata system resembles Buddhism and Jainism

### V. Substance of the Bhagavadgītā.

§ 11. We will now pass under review the main contents of the Bhagavadgītā, as from all appearances it is the earliest exposition of the Bhakti system or the Ekāntika Dharma.

Chapter II. Arjuna is reluctant to fight because it involves the destruction of his near and revered relatives and of other men. Bhagavat endeavours to remove the reluctance by speaking of the eternity and indestructibility of the human soul. Here are two stanzas which occur, with a variation in one of the lines, in the Katha Upaniṣad. Then to fight is spoken of as the duty of a Kṣatriya for whom there is no other good than a just fight. This mode of thinking is characterised as being Sāṃkhya, and the Yoga mode then follows

The condition of mind in the Yoga mode is a determined will. Those who according to the precepts of the Veda perform rites for fulfilment of various desires, cannot have a determined steadfast will. For attaining such a will one should think only of the deed to be done and not of the fruits to be derived from it. With a concentrated mind and without any attachment to other objects one should devote oneself to the deed alone. By such devotion to acts with a determined will, man finally attains inflexibility of will ( becomes *Sthitaprajña* ), and all his desires being uprooted, he attains complete serenity of soul or the Brāhmi condition. When he is in this condition at the time of death, he obtains quiescence in Brahman. This comes to the same doctrine as that stated in the Katha and Brhadāranyaka-Upaniṣads, that when all desires in the heart are uprooted, the mortal becomes immortal and attains to Brahman. The discipline, however, prescribed for

1. *Yadā sarvā pramucyante kāmā yeṣā hṛdi śrīcāh*, KU. VI, 14, and also BU, IV, 4. 7.

the attainment of this end is not simply moral, but religious also, since it is stated that after having controlled the senses which render the mind restless, a man should devote himself to Bhagavat.

§ 12. Chapter III. There are two paths, that of devotion to knowledge for the Sāṅkhyas, and that of devotion to Karmān or action for the Yogins. Every one is born for a life of activity, but the deeds done do not tie him down to the world, if he does them for worship (Yājña) and not for his private purposes. No Karmān is necessary for one whose enjoyments consist in himself, who is satisfied with himself and contented in himself. But for other people action is necessary, and it must be done without any selfish desire. Janaka and others obtained perfection by devoting themselves to actions alone, i. e., by the pursuit of an active life. But the action should be dedicated to the Supreme, and one should not seek any fruit for himself. But such a frame of mind is not attainable by ordinary men, who are under the influence of their physical nature and sensual passions.

Then a question is asked what it is that prompts man to sin. The reply is that it is desire and anger which are all-powerful and envelop a man's spiritual existence. Desire acts through the senses, but intelligence is superior to the senses, and superior to this latter is the will (Buddhi) and the soul is superior to Buddhi. Knowing oneself to be higher than Buddhi, one should curb oneself by efforts and kill desire which acts through the senses, viz., senses, intellect, will. Here the superiority of one faculty over another is an idea borrowed from the Katha-Upaniṣad. In connection with the teaching that action should be done disinterestedly, Bhagavat makes the closest possible approach to the Sāṅkhya doctrine that the soul being deluded by egoism (Ahaṁkāra) regards himself as the agent of the actions done by the qualities of nature (Prakṛti), and that, misled by the qualities of nature, he forms an attachment to the qualities and actions.

§ 13. Chapter IV. The chapter begins with Bhagavat's mention of his communication of this system to Vivasvat in the first instance, as alluded to above.<sup>1</sup> Incidentally the question of his ex-

<sup>1</sup> Ante, p. 1<sup>o</sup>. [ N. B. U. ]

istence at the time of Vivasvat comes up, and he then explains his being born again and again, and assuming incarnations for the destruction of the wicked by means of his Prakṛti. They who know the incarnations and the celestial deeds of Bhagavat, are released from the body and are not born again. By means of knowledge, men, being purified and their passions destroyed, and being devoted to him and resorting to him and resting on him, attained to the condition of Bhagavat. Bhagavat resorts to men in the manner in which they resort to him; men everywhere follow his path.

The idea of action without attachment is further developed. The metaphorical Yajñas are mentioned, such as the sacrifice of the senses into the fire of restraint, of the objects of the senses into the senses, of the operation of the senses and of the vital breaths into the fire of Yoga, which is the control of the self. All these Yajñas cannot be accomplished without acts. Of these the Yajña of knowledge is the best; for by its means one sees all things in one-self and in God (Supreme spirit). This highest knowledge brings about freedom from all sin, and destroys the polluting effect of action. The realisation of the Yoga sets aside the significance of the actions. This highest knowledge puts an end to all doubt and one becomes a spirit—a spirit totally free. When acts are done in this condition, they do not defile a person.—Here the tendency to rationalise Yajñas or sacrifices, which set in in the Upaniṣad period, is seen in a developed form, since the restraint of the senses, the attainment of knowledge, and such other practices are characterised as Yajñas or sacrifices.

Another point that deserves notice is the statement that Bhagavat deals with men in the manner in which they deal with him, that is, the spirit with which God is approached by men is reciprocated by God. This is followed by the affirmation that men everywhere, whatever the differences of their views, follow the path of Bhagavat. Here lies, in germ, the principle that all religions have a basis of truth in them.

§ 14. Chapter V. Sāṃkhya and Yoga are brought into connection with Samnyāsa and Karma-yoga. They are not independent of each other. Following either thoroughly, one obtains the fruit of both. The place which is obtained by Sāṃkhyas is obtained also

by Yogas For Jñānayajña or sacrifice of knowledge enabling a man to see all things in himself and in God and thus knowledge bringing about freedom from sin, the same condition is attained to which an active life or pursuit of actions ( Karmayoga ) brings about when the actions are done disinterestedly or without aiming at the fruit, with an eye directed towards Brahman only, the true essence of things Though this is so, still Samnyāsa is difficult to be realised without Yoga With Yoga one attains to it soon. A Yogin does not think that he does something when he sees, hears, eats, sleeps, etc. This is so when these acts are done without any attachment, the aim, being the realisation of Brahman The Yogins perform deeds by their body, mind, will, or simply by their senses, without any attachment for the sake of spiritual purification. By means of Yoga, Jñāna is obtained, and in this condition man looks at all things alike When a man looks at all things with the same regard, what he aims at is the Brahman and in it he rests. This leads to the consideration of the final peace in Brahman and the method of attaining it This peace in Brahman resembles the condition of an Arhat in Buddhism, but the Bhagavadgītā does not end there and adds that in this condition of deliverance a person comes to know the Supreme Soul as one to whom all kinds of worship and austere practices are directed as the lord of all worlds and the friend of all beings; and it is this knowledge that leads to peace.

§ 15. Chapter VI He who does not attach himself to the result of his actions and does what he ought to do, is Samnyāsīn as well as Yogin. Karman or action is necessary to become a sage ( Muni ). When he has attained the dignity of a sage, the essence of it is peace Then follows a description of the state of a man who has attained Yoga. Practice of Yoga, or contemplation, is then described When a man goes through the Yoga practices, he attains serenity in Bhagavat, i. e., becomes absorbed in him in peace. All the functions of the mind are suspended in the condition of Yoga Seeing himself by himself he rests in himself.

Then follows an explanation of the process of abstraction and concentration. A Yogin sees himself in all things and all things in himself, looks at all things in the same light. The Supreme Spirit is not lost to him who sees Him everywhere and sees everything in

Him, the Supreme Spirit. He who looks upon the Bhagavat as one, though he exists in all things, exists in him, though he moves about everywhere. He who regards all as himself (and looks upon them in the same light) in matters of happiness and misery is the best Yogin. Then Arjuna remarks on the difficulty of this Yoga. "The mind" he says, "is restless". But Bhagavat replies that it can be controlled by practice as well as by reflection on the vanity of things (Vairāgya). At the end Bhagavat teaches that he is the greatest Yogin, who, having faith in him, adores him with his whole soul centred in him.

The Yoga described in this chapter is found in some of the Upanisads, especially in the Śvetāśvatara. The affirmation "sees himself in himself and everywhere else" occurs in the Brhadāranyaka (IV. 4 23). The author winds up the chapter with a verse which is in every sense theistic, as he does the fifth chapter, in order, it would appear, that the description of the mental discipline contained in the last chapter, and of Yoga in this, might not lead to non-theistic conclusions. Care is taken to bring the whole into connection with the Supreme Soul.

§ 16. Chapter VII. In the last six chapters has been explained the whole process of Karmayoga from beginning to act regardless of the fruit, to the attainment of the condition of Yogin, who acting solely with a view to the acquisition of the Brāhma condition, is free from passions, looks upon all things alike; and it is added at the end that he is the best of the Yogins, who adores Bhagavat with faith and with a devoted heart. This is added to show that the processes up to the attainment of the Yoga condition, are difficult to be practised by men with such passions as we possess, and the way to be free from them is to surrender oneself to God; and therefore in this chapter Bhagavat goes on to explain the nature of created beings and of his relation to them. He begins by saying that God's Prakṛti is eightfold: the five elements, mind, will (Buddhi), and egoism. Jiva is another Prakṛti, which supports the world. From these are produced all objects or beings. Bhagavat is the source and the last resting place of the world. There is nothing further than him. All these things are strung together in him as gems in a string. That which is the characteristic excellence of a thing is Bhagavat himself. All

the three qualities and the conditions resulting from them proceed from him. Bhagavat is not in them and they are not in him. Bhagavat is beyond all these three conditions. The world, deluded by the conditions resulting from the three qualities, does not know Bhagavat, the Supreme Spirit, who is beyond them all. This Māyā of Bhagavat consisting of these qualities is very difficult to be got over, and this Māyā they get rid of, who take refuge in him. Wicked men do not resort to Bhagavat, their understanding being clouded by Māyā and resorting to Āsura or demonical condition.

The devotees of Bhagavat are of four kinds. Of these the Jñānin, or the enlightened, is the best. The Jñānin sticks to Bhagavat as his best refuge. The enlightened man surrenders himself to him, regarding Vāsudeva as everything. Other people are attached to other deities and undertake different vows. Their faith in their deities is generated by Bhagavat and strengthened by him. They worship those deities with that faith and attain fruit. That fruit is yielded by Bhagavat himself. But it is perishable. Not knowing Bhagavat's true nature, which is unchangeable and excellent, ignorant people regard him as something indiscrete at first and afterwards made discrete. He is not intelligible to all beings, being enveloped in Yogamāyā (mystic power). He knows the past, the present and the future, and nobody knows him. By likes and dislikes all beings are deluded, and those only, who are released from the insatiation of likes and dislikes, with their sins being destroyed by the practice of virtue, adore the Supreme. Those who know Bhagavat to be Adhijña (presiding over worship) and Adhibhūta (presiding over beings), come to know him when they depart this life.

For the idea of all existing things being strung together in the Supreme, we may compare MU. II. 2. 5, and BU. III 8. 3—4; 6—7. Ordinary people are represented as resorting to other deities, led by several desires. The Bhagavat confirms their faith in their deities, and the fruits that they get from them are perishable. Here appears the same idea as that noticed in chap. IV and to be noticed in chap. IX, viz. that the worshippers of other gods are really Bhagavat's worshippers, and that there is a principle of unity in all religions.

§ 17. Chapter VIII. Arjuna begins by putting questions about the three subjects mentioned in the last verse of the last chapter, and about Brahman and Adhyātma. Bhagavat then explains these. About perceiving him at the time of death he says: "He who leaves his body while remembering me at the time of death, attains to the same condition as mine." Finally he states that he who departs this life, while meditating on the all-knowing, eternal ruler, who is smaller than the smallest thing, who is the protector of all, whose form is unthinkable, whose brilliance is like that of the sun, and who is beyond all darkness—with devotion, his whole soul gathered between the brows with the power of concentration, reaches that Supreme Being, who is higher than the highest. He then mentions the attainment of the Unchangeable, with the mind concentrated, and the reaching of the final goal after leaving the body by means of a Yoga process and by the utterance of the syllable 'Om' and the remembrance of Bhagavat all the while. Bhagavat is easily attainable by one who meditates on him with a singleness of mind and is devoted to him. Every being is subject to transmigration, but is free from it when he reaches Bhagavat.

During the night of Brahman all these things are resolved into the indiscrete (Avyakta), and, when the day dawns, they spring out again from it. There is another substance, different from the Avyakta and itself indiscrete (Avyakta), which is not destroyed when all others are destroyed. This substance which is indiscrete, is unchangeable and that is the highest resting place, which being attained to, there is no return. That is Bhagavat's highest abode. That supreme soul, in whom all these beings are and who has spread out all this, is to be attained by single-minded devotion. Then he proceeds to mention the two paths. Those who die while the sun is in his northern course (Uttarāyana) go to Brahman, and those who die while he is in his southern course (Daksināyana) go to the orb of the moon, from which the soul returns.

It is worthy of observation that after mentioning that the man who meditates on the Supreme at the time of death reaches him, he mentions the attainment of the Aksara, which is the highest

goal, by resorting to a Yoga process. This seems to be like looking back on the Yoga practices for the attainment of the Aksara (Brahman) mentioned in the Upaniṣads, such as the Maudaka (II. 2. 3), and the Svetāsvatara (I. 14). In the first passage, the syllable 'Om' is compared to a bow, the soul to the arrow, and Brahman to the target which is to be hit. In the second a person is instructed to use his own body as the nether wooden piece and the Pranava as the upper one, and, practising meditations, which is like rubbing of the wooden pieces against each other, to discover the God hidden like Agni in the pieces of wood. Here the Aksara Brahman of the Maudaka is transformed into Deva (God) in the Svetāsvatara Upaniṣad, and the Bhagavadgītā also prescribes the meditating on Bhagavat while the syllable 'Om' is being uttered. Here, therefore, we see the effort to invest the unchangeable and indiscrete Brahman with a strong distinct personality. Later on in the chapter, another Avyakta is mentioned, besides that into which all things are resolved at the dissolution of the universe. This Avyakta is eternal and indestructible and is called Aksara and the highest goal. Here, however, this Aksara is at once rendered theistic by being spoken of as the highest abode or condition of Bhagavat.

§ 18. Chapter IX In this chapter Bhagavat proceeds to explain the direct and indirect knowledge which constitute the royal lore and the royal secret. It is to be directly perceived. It is holy and easy to be practised. The Bhagavat spread out all the universe. All things are in him and he is not in them, and still the objects are not in him. Wonderful is his lordly power. He is the sustainer of all beings and is not in them. His self brings all things into existence. As the air which exists in the sky is everywhere, so all beings are in him. At the dissolution of the world all beings are dissolved into his Prakṛti, and at the beginning of a new Kalpa they are discharged forth again. All these acts do not contaminate him, as he does them without any desire. With himself as the director, the Prakṛti brings forth the moveable and immoveable things. Foolish men discard him who has assumed a human form, not knowing his true nature, viz., that he is the lord and the great ruler of all; but great souls, assuming a godly nature, knowing him to be the origin of all beings, adore him

with single-mindedness. Some people worship him by Jñānayañña i. e., a rationalised sacrifice, taking him as one or several, or as having his face in all directions.

He is a subsidiary as well as the main sacrifice. He is Svadhā, herbs, Mantra, ghee. He is Agni and he is also oblation. He is father, mother, nourisher and grandfather of the world. He is Rc. Sāman, etc. He is the way, sustainer, lord, witness, shelter and friends etc. The knowers of the three Vedas, the drinkers of Soma, worshipping him by means of sacrifice, desire habitation in heaven, where they enjoy many pleasures. After their merit has been exhausted, they come back to the mortal world again. Those who thus follow the ritual of the three Vedas come and go. He looks after the welfare of those who think of him and meditate on him with single-mindedness and adore him. Those who worship other deities must be considered as worshipping him, but they do so not according to prescribed rules. He is the receiver and lord of all kinds of Yajñas or worship, but those people do not know him as he really is, and therefore they fail. Those who worship other deities attain to them, and his worshippers attain to him. All the oblations thrown into the fire, all that is eaten and given and the austerities practised should be dedicated to him. In this way these actions do not serve as a bondage, and one becomes a real Samnyāsīn and goes to him. He who adores Bhagavat with single-mindedness, becomes holy, even if he be wicked. He becomes immediately holy and obtains peace. Even women, Vaisyas and Sūdras, when they resort to him, attain to the highest place. The seeker of the good should direct his mind towards him, should be his devotee, should worship him, should bow to him, and acting in this way and being thus fully devoted to him, he will reach him.

Here the performance of sacrificial rites is, in the manner which has become usual, mentioned as efficacious for the acquisition of a place in heaven. From this place persons return when their merit is exhausted, but there is no return when a man devotes himself to Bhagavat with all his heart. God is further personalised and brought home to man by being declared as his father, mother, nourisher, grandfather, friend, refuge, etc. The attitude to other gods is of toleration. The worship offered to

them is really offered to Bhagavat, but the worshippers do not know Bhagavat as he truly is, and therefore go wrong.

§ 19. Chapter X. The gods and Rsis do not know the origin of Bhagavat. He was before them all. He who knows Bhagavat to be the unborn and unbeginning lord of all worlds, is free from all sins. All the mental conditions, knowledge, absence of ignorance, forgiveness, truth, self-control, serenity, pain and pleasure, etc. are from him. The seven ancient Maharsis and four Manus sprang from him, whose descendants are all these men. Good men adore Bhagavat with pure faith, knowing him to be the origin of all and that everything is set in motion by him. They, with their minds directed towards him, with their souls centred in him, enlighten each other, speak about him, and thus they are satisfied and are happy. Out of sympathy for them he dispels the darkness of ignorance by the light of knowledge, being himself in his true condition. When they adore him thus constantly full of love, he grants them that condition of mind by means of which they reach him.

Then questioned by Arjuna as to the Vibhūtis or excellent forms of each species or group, which pervade the world, Bhagavat proceeds to mention them. He is the soul that dwells in the heart of men and is the origin, the middle and the end of all beings. He is Viṣṇu of the Ādityas, the sun of all shining things, Kapila of the Siddhas, Prahlāda of all Daityas, Kāma of wielders of weapons, philosophy (Adhyātma) of all lores, Dvandva of compounds, Kīrti (fame) of all females, Vāsudeva of Vrsnis and Dhananjaya of Pāṇavas. That object which has excellence and splendour should be known as arising from his lustre.

There is to be observed here one special characteristic of the Bhakti school, and that is that all the devotees meet together, enlighten each other as to the nature of God, and contribute by discourses on him to each other's elevation and gratification. This is almost a characteristic mark of Bhaktas as distinguished from the Yogins, who have to go through their exercises singly and in solitude.

§ 20 Chapter XI. The Virāj form of God, i. e., all being looked at simultaneously as constituting one whole, as also his destructive

form, in which all enter into his mouth and are absorbed, is described in this chapter. Arjuna praises him that he does not see the end, the beginning, the middle of him, that he is the guardian of eternal righteousness and entreats him to give up this frightful form and assume the more usual and the more agreeable human form. In verse 30, Arjuna addresses him as Viṣṇu saying that his dazzling brilliance makes everything hot and his lustre has filled the whole universe

The idea of looking at the universe as a form of god is as old as the Puruṣasūkta (RV. X. 90). God's having eyes everywhere, face everywhere, arms everywhere and the feet everywhere is expressed in RV. X. 81. 3. This verse is repeated in Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad III. 3

§ 21. Chapter XII. This chapter starts with a question as to the difference between the contemplation on the original indiscrete cause which is unchangeable (Aksara), and the worship of him (Vāsudeva), and the reply is, they are the best devotees, who, fixing their minds upon him, meditate on him with a concentrated attention and faith. Those who, with their senses restrained, meditate on the Indiscrete, Unchangeable, Undefinable, as existing everywhere and unthinkable, also reach him, but the trouble to them is greater. Bhagavat delivers from the ocean of death those, who, dedicating all their actions to him and meditating on him, worship him; and he teaches Arjuna to fix his mind on him and concentrate his will on him, and, if he cannot fix his mind firmly upon him, then to endeavour to obtain him by continued remembrance of him. If this last is not feasible, he should perform deeds for his sake, and doing this he would obtain success. If, however, he is not able to do this, with his mind fixed on him, he should abandon desire for the fruit of all his actions. Then follows an enumeration of the virtues of those who are devotees of God and are specially dear to him, such as not hating any being, being the friend of all, being humble, being indifferent to praise or censure, etc.

In this chapter the meditation on the Aksara or unchangeable indiscrete cause is again mentioned as opposed to the worship of Bhagavat as a personal God. In similar passages in the previous chapters, the personalisation is effected at once by inserting a

clause applicable only to a personal God. But here the meditation on Avyakta is spoken of as successful, but is condemned as being very difficult to be practised, and the theistic aim of the work is kept in view.

§ 22 Chapter XIII. This body is the Ksetra, and he who knows this body as his own, is Ksetrajña. The Bhagavat is also Ksetrajña in all the Ksetras. This subject about the Ksetra and Ksetrajña has been variously treated by the Rishis in verses of various metres, and determined by the words of the Brahmasūtra unfolding reasons. Ksetra consists of the twenty-four elements mentioned in the Sāṃkhya system and desire, hatred, pleasure and pain, and body, life and courage, which are Ātma-guṇas according to the Vaiśeṣikas. Bhagavat then proceeds to enumerate the virtues, such as humility, sincerity, etc., which constitute it is said, Jñāna or knowledge, but which are to be taken as means to knowledge. Then are alluded to knowledge, or true philosophy, and its reverse. He then mentions the Jñeya, or thing to be known, and it is Para-brahman, which has no beginning nor end, which is neither existent nor non-existent, and which has hands and feet everywhere, and which has eyes, head and face everywhere, which has ears everywhere, and which pervades all. And thus the description of godhead proceeds in the words of the Upanisads.

Prakṛti and Puruṣa are unbeginning. All changes and qualities are produced from Prakṛti. Prakṛti is the cause in bringing about effect, and Puruṣa is the cause in the enjoyment and sufferance of happiness and misery. The Puruṣa being connected with Prakṛti, enjoys or endures the properties or effects of the Prakṛti; and the cause is his being connected with the Guṇas or qualities. Besides all these various principles, there is in this body Puruṣa, the Supreme Soul, who is the witness of everything, who is the sustainer, enjoyer and the great lord. By meditation some see the self by self, others see it by Sāṃkhyayoga and Karmayoga. Any moving or unmoving thing that comes into existence is produced by the union of Ksetra and Ksetrajña. He, who sees the Supreme Lord equally in all things, who is not destroyed when other things are destroyed, sees truly. Seeing God equally in all things, a man does no injury to himself, and attains to the highest goal. He truly sees, who sees all acts as done by Prakṛti.

and Purusa as not the actor. When he regards all separate beings as existing in one place, and sees development proceeding thence, he becomes Brahman. The Supreme Spirit, though dwelling in the body, does not do anything and is not contaminated, because he is unbeginning and is devoid of qualities and unchangeable. The spirit is not contaminated, just as space or ether existing everywhere is not. Just as the sun illuminates the whole world, so does the Ksetrajña illuminate the Ksetra.

The Karmayoga, leading up to the condition of a Yogin, who looks at all things with the same regard and makes no distinction between them and himself, has been described in the first six chapters. In the next six the Bhaktiyoga, or loving adoration of God, is the subject treated of, and the final effect of it is the formation of the fully righteous character which distinguishes a Bhakta who is dear to Bhagavat. With chapter XIII begins the consideration of subsidiary subjects. In this Bhagavat speaks of the Ksetra and Ksetrajña, or the soul and its dwelling place, and of another soul, that is, himself also dwelling in the Ksetra. In connection with this subject he refers to the poetic works of the previous Rsis and to the words of the Brahmasūtra.

— What these works are it is difficult to say; but what follows is, first, the mention of the twenty-four principles generally associated with the Sāṃkhya system, as well as seven others, all of which constitute the Ksetra; secondly, the enumeration of the virtues that qualify one to the attainment of knowledge, thirdly, the statement about knowledge (Jñāna), or that which is true philosophy, and also Ajñāna, which is the reverse; and fourthly, the description of the Jñeya or the thing to be known, which is Parabrahman or the Supreme Soul. This last contains the attributes given in the Upaniṣads, and a verse and a half are verbally quoted from the ŚU. There are also other statements in the concluding verses which resemble KU. V. 11, and ŚU V 4. Then there is a statement about the nature of the Prakṛti and Purusa quite in keeping with the Sāṃkhya system; but the existence of the highest spirit in the body along with the animal soul is mentioned. Thus is the atheism of the Sāṃkhya system studiously avoided, whenever there is a reference to its doctrines. Then

follow reflections on God and the seeing of the Supreme Soul everywhere

The works, therefore, upon which this chapter is based are some of the Upanisads and some treatises setting forth the constitution of the world and the principles of morality. These treatises may have been the discourses first independent and afterwards included in the Sāntiparvan and other parts of the Mahābhārata, or they may have been others of which we have no trace; but there is no mention here of the Sāṃkhya system by name nor a special reference to it as elaborated in later times by Īśvarakṛṣṇa. The idea of the twenty-four principles is ancient and seems to have been appropriated afterwards by the founders of the philosophic systems, as it suited their purpose. But no chronological conclusions can be deduced from the mention of those twenty-four principles. The doctrine that all action proceeds from the Prakṛti, and the soul is inactive and simply enjoys or suffers, which is a true Sāṃkhya doctrine, but is calculated to absolve a man from moral responsibility, is also mentioned; but it appears to come incidentally along with the twenty-four principles

§ 23 Chapter XIV. The great Brahman is the womb (Yoni) for Bhagavat into which he throws seed. Of all the wombs that produce bodily forms, Brahman is the greatest. Bhagavat then proceeds to detail the nature of the three Guṇas, their products and their results in the future world. These Guṇas prove as bondage, and when they are got over, then the man is free from the bondage and becomes immortal. The distinguishing characteristic of one who is free from these three Guṇas is a quiet undisturbed serene mood, in which happiness and misery are alike, and gold, clod of earth and stone are alike, in which agreeable and disagreeable things are alike, and praise and censure are also alike, etc. He who invariably resorts to Bhagavat by Bhaktiyoga becomes free from these three Guṇas and attains to the condition of Brahman. Bhagavat is the support of the immortal and unchanging Brahman and of eternal righteousness (duty) and of unending happiness.

Here then is a distinct affirmation of the soul's attainment of freedom from passions by means of continuous devotion to Bhaga-

vat or God. The word *Brahmayoni* occurs in MU. III. 13, and is to be interpreted, in the light of the opening statement in the above, as one whose Yoni is Brahman.

§ 24 Chapter XV Bhagavat proceeds to the comparison of Samsāra, or the whole extent of things, to the Pippal-tree. This tree is to be cut by the weapon of indifference or non-attachment; and then should be sought that place from which there is no return. One should surrender himself to the original Purusa. Those reach that unchanging position or place, who are free from pride, ignorance, desires, and the pair of happiness and misery. That is the highest abode of Bhagavat, which is not illuminated by the sun, the moon or the fire. When a soul departs from a body, it takes away the Indriyas, of which Manas is the sixth, and brings them in when it assumes another body. The soul itself is a part of Bhagavat and is eternal. This soul, placing itself in these six Indriyas, resorts to all objects of sense. The brilliance existing in the sun, which illumines the whole world, and which exists in the moon as well as in fire, is to be known as that of Bhagavat. By becoming Soma, Bhagavat raises all herbs. By becoming fire he contributes to digestion. He dwells in the heart of all. From him proceeds consciousness of one's condition, knowledge, and the rejection of what is not true. Bhagavat alone is to be known by means of all the Vedas and as the author of Vedāntas and the knower of the Veda. There are two souls in the world, one that changes, and the other that is unchangeable. Besides these there is another who is the highest and is called Paramātman, and who as the unchangeable lord supports all the three worlds after entering into them. Bhagavat is known to be that Highest Soul in the ordinary world and also in the Vedas.

There is one new point brought out in this chapter. And that is that the animal soul goes out of the body along with the six senses and enters new ones in that condition. The comparison of the composite universe to the Pippal-tree occurs in KU. (VI. 1), MaiU. (VI. 4), and the non-illumination of the highest abode of Bhagavat is mentioned in a verse in KU. (V. 15), MU. (II. 2. 10), and ŚU. (VI. 14). The doctrine of the existence of the third highest Purusa should also be noted as a characteristic of this theistic work. The triad, Ksara, Aksara or Ātman (individual

soul ), and the ruling one God, is mentioned in ŚU. ( I. 10 ), which work is a precursor of the Bhagavadgītā.

§ 25 Chapter XVI. Bhagavat now proceeds to enumerate the virtues which constitute the divine endowments (*Dāivī Sampad*), and the vices that constitute demoniacal possessions. From divine endowments results final deliverance, and from the demoniacal possessions, follows destruction. There are two classes of created beings : one is divine and the other demoniacal. In persons of the latter class there is no purity nor correct conduct nor truth. They regard the world as unreal, without substratum or support, without God, disconnected and what more, springing from lust. Holding this view these wicked and dull persons with their ferocious deeds bring about the destruction of the world. Full of insatiable lust and possessed of vanity, pride, and arrogance, they act in an unholy manner, sticking to their own false conceits. They accumulate wealth by foul means for enjoyment and boasting of their possessions, their power, their parentage, they treat others with contempt and eventually go to the infernal regions. If they worship at all, they simply utter the name and assume a false garb. They are full of egotism and hate Bhagavat as abiding in their own bodies and those of others. These wicked men he consigns to the race of the demons. Desire, anger and covetousness are the three doors to hell. These three, therefore, should be abandoned. He who avoids these three doors reaches the highest goal. He who abandons sacred precepts and acts according to his own will, does not obtain success, happiness or the highest goal. The sacred precepts must, therefore, be followed whenever a man has to do anything or avoid anything.

Here two classes of men, good and bad, are mentioned. Among the latter are included not only worldly men who do not care for God or morality, but the followers of philosophical or religious systems, different from that of Bhagavat seem also to be included. They set aside the sacred Śāstra or precepts, denied God, as Buddhists and Jainas did, and regarded the world as unsubstantial or unreal, as the former did.

§ 26. Chapter XVII. Arjuna asks : " What is the frame of mind of those who set aside the sacred precepts and still worship

with faith? Is it characterised by the quality of goodness, activity or ignorance?" Bhagavat answers: "Faith is of three kinds, characterised by goodness, activity, and darkness or ignorance. The faith of a man depends upon the quality of his heart. A man is what faith makes of him. As is his faith, so is the man". The good worship gods, the active, Yaksas and Raksases or evil spirits, and the ignorant, ghosts and spectres. Men of demoniacal frame of mind perform terrible austerities full of ostentation and egotism, and cause attenuation of the elements composing the body and of the Bhagavat who dwells in it. He then mentions three kinds of food, modes of worship, austerities and gifts, in keeping with the three qualities. For instance, in the case of worship or sacrifice, that is in keeping with the quality of goodness which is performed without any regard for the fruit and in accordance with the sacred ritual. That springs from the quality of activity, which is done for the attainment of fruit and out of ostentation; and that which is done without regard for the sacred precepts and without Dakṣiṇā or rewards to the priest and without any faith, proceeds from the quality of ignorance. As to charitable gifts, those spring from the quality of goodness, which are made because it is a duty to give to one from whom no return is expected; while that which is made with an interested motive and with a desire for return, springs from the quality of activity. And in this manner all the four subjects are treated. At the end the doing of good acts by the repetition of the syllables "Om, tat, sat" is mentioned.

In this chapter the truth that man's religious faith and the character of the God that he worships, depend upon his own character whether good or bad, is clearly recognised. Not only the nature of the God worshipped, but also the diet, the mode of worship, charity or gifts, and the practice of austerity differ according as a man's nature is influenced by one or other of the three qualities, goodness, activity, and ignorance.

§ 27. Chapter XVIII. This chapter begins with a question by Arjuna as to the principles of renunciation and abandonment. Bhagavat replies that renunciation is the giving up of works springing from desires, and abandonment is the abandonment of fruits of actions. Some say that all Karman should be abandoned; others say that worship, charity and austerity should not be given

up The decision is that these last should not be abandoned, as they bring about purity of the soul. The actions should be done without being attached to them or desiring for the fruits. That duty that must be done, should not be abandoned. Giving up that duty is an ignorant deed. When action is avoided because it is wearisome, its abandonment springs from the quality of passion. When the essential action is done because it should be done without any desire for fruit or attachment, that abandonment springs from goodness. It is not possible for a living being to abandon all actions. He who abandons only the fruit, is really one who has abandoned actions. According to the Sāṃkhya doctrine, there are five different causes: the resting place, agent, instrument, varied movements and fate. In this manner it goes on. Some acts or states of mind are represented to vary according to the three qualities, such as knowledge, the deed done and the doer, Buddha or will, firmness and happiness, and the duties of the different castes.

The man who worships Him, from whom all beings have sprung and who has spread out all this, by doing the duties assigned to him, for which the three qualities have fitted him, attains final success. He then proceeds to mention all those virtues and other states of mind, such as self-control, freedom and passions, which conduce to the realisation of the Brahma-condition. When this condition is realised, a man is free from sorrow and desire, and, being equally disposed towards all beings, he develops in himself the highest love for Bhagavat, and knowing Bhagavat fully and truly, enters into the Bhagavat. One should do all acts, intent only upon God, and then one obtains the eternal place by the favour of God. A man should fix his mind upon Bhagavat alone, dedicating all his actions to him, and then he gets over all evils by the grace of Bhagavat.

Then Bhagavat winds up the whole by teaching Arjuna to surrender himself with all his heart to God (the Ruler), who abides in the hearts of all things and moves them, as if forming parts of a wheel; and then he says, by his favour Arjuna would obtain perfect peace and an eternal resting-place. He is further instructed to dedicate his whole mind to Bhagavat, to become

his devotee, to worship him, to bow to him, and in this way he (Arjuna) would reach him. This is styled the deepest secret. Then Arjuna is told to set aside all other methods of salvation and surrender himself to Bhagavat alone, and Bhagavat would then free him from all his sins. And thus the chapter ends.

This is the Ekāntika Dharma or monotheistic religion, which, as the Nārāyaṇya tells us, was communicated to Arjuna. The method of salvation here revealed is to lead a life of action, but the fruit of the action one should not be intent on. The action should be done disinterestedly, that is, a man should be selfless in doing it. The action should be dedicated to Brahman, that is, it should be done because the Universal Order requires it to be done. This is tantamount to saying that one should do one's duty because it is a duty. When a more personal interpretation is given to it, the doctrine comes to this, that one should act with the sole object of carrying out God's will. The frame of mind that is generated by consistently acting in this manner, is freedom from passion, a sense of the omnipresence of God and an equal regard for all things. This leads to the realisation of the highest love of God, and, knowing Bhagavat thoroughly, by this means a man is absorbed in him.

But to do one's duty consistently and selflessly is a matter difficult, since all beings are subject to the influence of the three qualities or, in our modern phraseology, of passions and appetencies. These can be got over by surrendering oneself to God.

## **VI. The Sources of the Religion of the Bhagavadgītā.**

§ 28. This constant insistence on action being done without any regard for the fruit, that is, distinterestedly or selflessly, forms a peculiarity of the Bhagavadgītā. But the idea is not new. In the Īsopaniṣad it is stated in the second verse, that a man should desire to live a hundred years doing actions resolutely, and in that way and no other, will action not contaminate him. And the non-contamination as the result of an elevated state of mind is spoken of in ChU. IV. 14. 3; BU. 4. 23, and MaiU. VI. 20.

The attributes of the Supreme Being the Gītā draws from the Upaniṣads, as has been already shown in the remarks on the differ-

ent chapters. While the personality of God is fully acknowledged in certain parts of the Upaniṣads, mere Brahman, the personality of which is not so distinct, is also spoken of in some places. When the Bhagavadgītā takes in these passages it takes care to distinctly personalise the Aksara or Brahman, as we have shown. The source from which the Gītā derives its doctrines about the conquest of the self and the attainment of a condition of a peace and serenity, is the general atmosphere of religious and moral sentiment, that came to prevail from the beginning of the earliest Upaniṣad speculations to the formation of definite religious systems, orthodox and heterodox. Consequently, though the Gītā speaks of the Brahma-Nirvāṇa, it ought not to be supposed that it borrows this doctrine of final peace and serenity from Buddhism. The source resorted to by these systems was common to all.

Besides the Upaniṣads and the religious and moral atmosphere prevalent at that time, the Gītā avails itself of the philosophy that had come into existence in early times. This is the philosophy of the Sāṃkhya and the Yoga. Though the twenty-four principles of the former system, together with the Puruṣa or soul as the twenty-fifth, as known in later times, and the doctrine of the activity of the Prakṛti only and the non-activity of Puruṣa are alluded to in the Bhagavadgītā, still it adds another soul called the Uttama Puruṣa or the Supreme Soul, which is not found in the later Sāṃkhya, thus giving a theistic character to the philosophy. In their account of the creation, the Purāṇas follow this philosophy, and the later Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva systems adopt it in a more or less qualified manner.

But the word Sāṃkhya does not seem to be used in the Bhagavadgītā to indicate the later non-theistic system. In the second chapter and in the fifth, Sāṃkhya indicates a philosophy based upon knowledge, and Yoga, one based on action. Again the five causes, that are alluded in the last chapter as mentioned in the Sāṃkhya system, do not appear to be known to the later Sāṃkhya. The speculative philosophy, therefore, that existed about the time of the Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad and the Bhagavadgītā, was known by the name of Sāṃkhya, and out of it grew the non-theistic system of later times. The Yoga,

the philosophy of action, too did prevail, but it culminated, as indicated before, into a concentration of mind, the ordinary operation being suspended, on the Brahman, Aksara, or the Supreme Soul

§ 29 Thus the Bhagavadgītā is the result of development of the religious and philosophic speculation that prevailed before the rise of Buddhism. But the origin of the idea of Bhakti, or love of God, which is the characteristic of the work, has formed the subject of a great deal of speculation in modern times, and to this point we will now turn. In the Upanisads, Upāsānā, or fervent meditation of a number of things—such as Manas (mind), the sun, the Purusa in the sun or the moon, food, vital-breath, etc., regarded as Brahman, i.e., thinking of them as Brahman—is prescribed. Such a fervent meditation cannot but magnify the thing and give it a glorious form so as to excite admiration and even love. Again what is called the Internal Ātman (soul) is said in the Brhadāraṇyaka to be dearer than a son, wealth and everything else (I. 4. 8). Here the word Ātman may possibly be taken to mean one's own soul. In the same Upanisad there is another passage which runs thus: "This is that Great Unborn, who is of the form of thought among vital airs, who dwells in the cavity of the heart, who is controller of all, ruler of all, the lord of all. By doing good or evil deeds he does not become better or worse. He is the ruler of all beings, he is the causeway or dike that separates things from one another and prevents them being confused together (he is the preserver of order). The Brāhmaṇas desire to know him by the words of the Vedas, by worship, charity and austerity. Knowing him, one becomes a sage. The recluses desiring him as the place to live in, renounce the world. On this account the wise men of old did not desire progeny, saying to themselves 'What shall we do with progeny, when we have got this Being, this world to live in?'; and thus they gave up desire for sons, wealth and the world and lived the life of mendicants" (IV. 4. 22).

Now, if those wise men of old gave up all the pleasures of the world to contemplate and dwell with the Supreme Being, so eloquently described, must it not be considered that they were actuated by love for Him, though the word Bhakti does not occur

here? And at the bottom of all those rapturous sayings about the peace attained by seeing the Supreme Soul in the world and the heart of man, there must be a feeling akin to love. And during the period when the Rgveda poetry was composed, love for God or gods was often an abiding sentiment in the heart of the poet, as is evident from the words: "Dyaus is my father" (RV. I. 104. 33), "Aditi (the boundless) is father, mother, and son" (RV. I. 89. 10; and from such prayers as "O father Dyaus, avert all evils", "Be accessible to us and gracious as a father to the son", etc. Though the later sacrificial ritual destroyed the spirit of these verses and converted them into simple verbal formulae, still the feeling that was in the heart at the time when they were composed, must have continued, though it found no expression for a time and exhibited itself again mixed with wonder and admiration in the times of the Upanisads. It certainly was not absent during this last period. The text about the two birds, the friends and companions of each other, by which are meant the Supreme and Individual souls exists in the Rksamhitā (I. 164. 20) and is repeated in the Mundaka-Upanisad (VII. 1. 1).

In the last (MU. III. 2. 3), and in the KU. (II. 23), there is a verse to the effect that this Supreme Soul is not to be attained by lectures (from a teacher), nor by intelligence, nor by much learning; he is to be attained by him whom the Supreme Soul favours; to him he discloses his form. Again we have the doctrine that the supremely wise Being, the life of all, leads a man to do good deeds, whom he desires to elevate (KBU. III. 8); and another, that God dwelling in the heart of all beings, controls them—which latter forms the subject of a celebrated passage in the BU. III. 7. From this it is clear that the doctrine that the individual soul is dependent on the Supreme and that the latter alone works out his salvation, was acknowledged in Upanisad times.

§ 30 In this manner all the points that constitute the Ekāntika religion of the Bhagavadgītā are to be found in the older religious literature. The word Bhakti, however, in the sense of love is not to be found except in a verse in ŚU., "But that word is not always used in the sense of love even by Rāmānuja. In his system Bhakti means constant meditation and corresponds to the Upāsānā of

of the Upanisads. The word etymologically signifies resorting to and then loving the thing resorted to. It is used in this sense by Pāṇini in Sūtra IV. 3 95; but the word, as explained by the commentators, has a passive sense and means a thing resorted to, liked or loved; and general and special terminations are prescribed, which, when affixed to a noun, indicate one by whom the thing expressed by the noun is liked or loved. In this sense the word Bhakti is used by Yāska also, when he speaks of certain things as Agnibhaktini, Indrabhaktini, i e., things which resort to, or relate themselves to, Agni, etc. Thus the idea of love was associated with the word in early times, though it then signified loved instead of love. Properly speaking, by the rules of Pāṇini himself, it ought to signify the latter, as the suffix *ti* indicates Bhāva or condition. Howsoever the word may have come into use in later times, the thing expressed by it, viz., love for the Ātman or the Supreme Soul, was an idea implied and often expressed by the word Priya or Preyas in the Upaniṣad period.

§ 31. The state of things which must have led to the evolution of the religion of the Gītā seems to me to be this. About the time when the systems of religion we have been considering arose, there was a tendency amongst the people which often worked itself out, as is evident from the Pālī Birth-Stories, to give up worldly life and betake themselves to a residence in forests or mountains. Even Buddhism, Jainism and other like systems considered an ascetic life to be a sine qua non of religious elevation. There is reason to believe that Śramanas existed before the rise of Buddhism. The religious systems that had sprung up were mostly atheistic. The Indian mind had become prone to indulge in mere moral discourses and thoughts of moral exaltation, unassociated with a theistic faith, as appears clear from Buddhism and other systems, and also from dry moral dissertations of which the Mahābhārata is full. Such a system as that of the Bhagavadgītā was, therefore, necessary to counteract these tendencies. Theistic ideas were so scattered in the Upaniṣads, that it was necessary for practical purposes to work them up into a system of redemption capable of being grasped easily.

These appear to be the conditions under which the Gītā came

into existence I am not inclined to dissolve Vasudeva and Arjuna into solar myths; but Vasudeva could not have been living when the Bhagavad-gītā was composed as a discourse delivered by him, any more than Buddha was living when his discourses were reduced to the form of books. It is worthy of remark that both of them are called Bhagavats when speaking. Vasudeva must already have been deified before the Bhagavad-gītā was written.

As regards the attitude of the Bhagavat to the older belief, it is evident that it is conservative and he came to fulfil the law and not supersede it. It must already have been seen that he looks at the sacrificial religion from almost the same point of view as the Upanisads. The cherishing of desires which the sacrificial rites encouraged is considered harmful, and the fruit attained by means of them is perishable. It was because this Ekāntika religion was so conservative, that it gradually made its way into Hindu society in general, though it did not succeed in uprooting the religion of sacrifices. Still it always retained its character as a religion for women and for all castes, Śūdras included, and in its later development it was associated with such Vedic rites as then remained when it was professed by the Brāhmanas, but not so associated when its followers were of lower castes, among whom it continued to exercise great influence. The Bhagavat's attitude towards the worshippers of other gods has already been explained. It was strictly liberal. All worship to whomsoever it was directed, reaches him ultimately, but the devotees of other gods do not know Bhagavat as he truly is and thus go wrong. This attitude must have had something to do with the influence of the Vasudeva-Kṛṣṇa cult over the lower classes.

### VII. Identification of Vasudeva with Nārāyaṇa.

§ 32. The word Nārāyaṇa is similar to Nāḥāyana, which last is formed by P. IV 1. 99 and means the Gotra Nāḥāyana. The termination is significative and means in this case the resting place or the place to which Nāda or a collection of Nādas go. So Nārāyaṇa means the resting place or goal of Nāra or a collection of Nāras<sup>1</sup>. In the Nārāyaṇīya ( XII 341 ) Kṛṣṇa or

<sup>1</sup> See Medhātithi's commentary on Manu 1. 10.

Hari says to Arjuna that he is known as the resting place or goal of men (Narānām). The word Nā or Nara is also used to denote gods as manly persons, especially in the Vedas, so that Nārāyaṇa may be construed as the resting place or goal of gods. There is a tradition which connects Nārāyaṇa with the primeval waters. Manu (1. 10), and also Hari in the above passage say that the waters were called Nārās because they were the sons of Nara, and, since they were the first resting place of Brahmā in the first case and of Hari in the second, the two were called Nārāyaṇas. The Purāṇas, such as the Vāyu and the Viṣṇu, agree with Manu. Again there is a tradition that Brahmaḍeva sprang from the lotus in the navel of Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu (MBh III. 12. 34 and XII 349 18). In the Vāyu-Purāṇa Nārāyaṇa is represented as prior to Avyakta or matter in an undeveloped form, and from Avyakta sprang the mundane egg, and from the latter arose Brahmaḍeva.

All these traditions in various forms seem to go back to RV. X. 82 5 and 6, which may be thus translated: "Prior to the sky, prior to this earth, prior to the living gods, what is that embryo which the waters held first and in which all the gods existed? The waters held that same embryo in which all gods exist or find themselves; on the navel of the unborn stood something in which all beings stood". In this we have first the waters mentioned; on those waters stood the embryo, which corresponds to the Brahmā of the later tradition, who created everything; and the unborn corresponds to Nārāyaṇa from whose navel he sprang. In this embryo all the gods, it is said, found themselves. This corresponds to the Naras, men or gods, whose goal or resting place was Nārāyaṇa, so that this confirms the identity between Brahmā and Nārāyaṇa mentioned by Manu and some of the Purāṇas. Nārāyaṇa therefore, who, by the other authorities cited above, is considered prior to Brahmaḍeva and to the Svayambhū of Manu, is another person and has a cosmic character and is not a historical or mythological individual. This idea of Nārāyaṇa was developed in the period of the later Brāhmanas and Āraṇyakas.

In the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (XII. 3. 4), Puruṣa Nārāyaṇa is represented to have sent forth from the place of sacrifice Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas by means of the morning, midday and evening libations respectively, he alone remaining in the place. Fra-

jāpati tells him to sacrifice again, and the substance of the whole is that Nārāyaṇa placed himself in all the worlds, in all the gods, in all the Vedas and in all the vital airs, and they were placed in him. This shadows forth the rising of Nārāyaṇa to the dignity of the Supreme Soul, who pervades all and in whom all things exist and who in the beginning sent forth all the gods, being himself their receptacle or resting place as indicated in RV X. 82. 6. In another place ( XIII. 6. 1 ) Puruṣa Nārāyaṇa is mentioned as having conceived the idea of a Pañcarātra Sattrā (continued sacrifices for five days ) as the means of obtaining superiority over all beings and becoming all beings. He performed the sacrifices and attained to that dignity. Here also Nārāyaṇa's becoming the Supreme Ruler and becoming all are spoken of. Nārāyaṇa is represented as the author of the Puruṣasūkta ( RV X 90 ) This appears to be as much a fanciful representation, as that of Viśvakarman and others as authors of other hymns. As in these last cases, it has a connection with the deity to which the hymn refers, so that Nārāyaṇa is another name of the Puruṣa, and these two names are associated together, as we have seen, in the above citations from the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa. In the Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka ( X. 11 ) Nārāyaṇa is described with all the attributes of the Supreme soul, which are usually found mentioned in the Upaniṣads.

In the Mahābhārata and Purāṇas, he figures as the supreme god, especially in connection with the creation; mythologically he is represented as lying on the body of a huge serpent in the ocean of milk, the original conception of his connection with the primeval waters being still kept. Nārāyaṇa thus became an object of worship. In the Ghosundi Inscription noticed before,<sup>1</sup> there is what appears to be a dedication of an enclosure to Nārāyaṇa ( Nārāyaṇa-Vātikā )

§ 33. The heaven of this Nārāyaṇa was the Śvetadvīpa or white island. In the Kathāsaritsāgara ( 54. 19, 21, 23 ) Naravāhana-datta is represented to have been carried to the white island by Devasiddhi and to Hari reposing on the body of the serpent Śeṣa and attended by Nārada and other devotees. In another place in the same work ( 115, 101-3 ) certain gods are spoken of as having gone to Śvetadvīpa and seen Hari in a house made of great gems,

<sup>1</sup> Ante, p 4.

[ N. B. U. ]

lying on the serpent bed with Lakṣmī sitting at his feet. In the Hari-vamśa ( 14,384 ) it is stated that Yogins and Kāpilasāmkhyas, who desire Mokṣa or final deliverance, go to the white island or Svetadvīpa, by reciting the prayer and praise composed by Balin. Evidently, therefore, Śvetadvīpa or white island is the heaven in which Nārāyaṇa, spoken of sometimes as Hari, dwells. It corresponds to the Vaikuntha of Viṣṇu, the Kailāsa of Śiva, and the Goloka of Gopālakṛṣṇa; and to that heaven of Nārāyaṇa it was that Nārada went and saw him and learned from him the monotheistic religion of Vāsudeva. There is, therefore, no need to suppose that the white island was a Christian country peopled by white races.

§ 34. Nārāyaṇa, being thus evolved as the Supreme Being in the later Brāhmanic period, was, of course, prior to Vāsudeva, and in the epic times when the worship of the latter arose, Vāsudeva was identified with Nārāyaṇa. In the Vanaparvan ( chaps 188, 189 ) there is a description of the condition of things at the time of dissolution of the universe, in which it is stated that there was water everywhere and there was a boy lying on couch on a branch of a Nyagrodha tree. He opened his mouth and took in Mārkaṇḍeya, who roamed in the inside and saw the whole universe and was struck with wonder. Then the boy vomited or threw him out, when he saw again the waters alone. Mārkaṇḍeya then asked the boy who he was; then he said: "Formerly I gave to the waters the name of Nārāṇ, and those were my resting place (Ayana), and therefore I am Nārāyaṇa", and thus he goes on to describe his greatness. Finally Mārkaṇḍeya, who tells the whole story, says to Yudhiṣṭhira that Janārdana, his relative, is this same Nārāyaṇa. The burden of the whole of the Nārāyaṇīya section seems to be this identity between Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva.

Besides this Nārāyaṇa, the creator of all, there was a tradition about another who was always associated with Nara. This companionship seems to be traceable to the Upaniṣad idea of two birds dwelling in a tree, friends and associates of each other. That one of those, who is called the lord and the onlooker, is in the present tradition Nārāyaṇa, and the other, who is engaged in eating the fruit of the tree, Nara. The old idea was transferred to the new conception of Nārāyaṇa as the resting place or abode of all men. In

the opening chapter of the Nārāyaṇīya it is stated that Nārāyaṇa the eternal soul of the universe, with four forms became the son of Dharma. The four forms or four sons were Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Hari and Kṛṣṇa. The first two of these devoted themselves to the practice of austerities in the Badarikāśrama.

The same story is given in the Vāmana-Purāṇa (chap. 6) These four are represented as the sons of Dharma and had Ahimsā (non-killing) as their mother. This story seems to be significant. About the time when the new systems of religion arose, the ideas that were undergoing fermentation, were Dharma or righteousness and Ahimsā or non-slaughter, as against the old ceremonial of sacrificial rites and the killing of animals in accordance with it. These four names, therefore, were names connected with the introduction of a new system of religion, not heterodox, which concerned itself with righteousness and non-slaughter of animals. That is what appears to be meant by Dharma being called the father of these four and Ahimsā their mother.

Nara and Nārāyaṇa are sometimes called Rsis, and that is probably to be traced to the conception of Nārāyaṇa as the Rsi or composer of the Puruṣasūkta. These gods must have been very famous at the time when the Mahābhārata was composed, since in the opening stanza of the different books obeisance is made to these two gods. In the Vanaparvan (12. 46, 47) Janardana is represented to have said to Arjuna : " Oh invincible one, thou art Nara and I am Hari Nārāyaṇa, and we, the sages Nara-Nārāyaṇa, have come to this world at the proper time ; thou art not different from me, oh Pārtha, and I am not different from thee ; it is not possible to know any difference between us " In chap. 30 ( verse 1 ) of the same Parvan, the God of gods ( Śiva ) says to Arjuna : " In a former birth ( body ) thou wast Nara and with Nārāyaṇa for thy companion, performedst austerities for many thousands of years in Badari ". In the Udyogaparvan ( 49. 19 ) it is said : " The two heroes, Vāsudeva and Arjuna, who are great warriors, are the old gods Nara and Nārāyaṇa. This is the tradition " In this manner there are a good many examples of the identification of Arjuna and Vāsudeva with Nara and Nārāyaṇa. And thus the old tradition about the two Rsis who

ere warriors at the same time was brought into connection with the two interlocutors of the Bhagavadgītā

### VIII. Identification of Vāsudeva with Viṣṇu.

§ 35. Viṣṇu is a Vedic deity. There are but few hymns addressed to him in RV., but his personality is by no means unimportant. The long strides which he takes, and the three steps by which he measures the universe, are always described with an enthusiastic spirit. His first two steps can be discerned and approached by men, but the third no one can dare transgress, and it is beyond the flight of birds\* (RV. I. 155. 5). The wise see the highest place of Viṣṇu (Paramam padam), as it were an eye fixed in the heaven (RV. I. 22. 20). In the highest place of Viṣṇu there is a well of honey, and there the gods rejoice (RV. I. 154. 5). Viṣṇu appears as the comrade and helper of Indra.

Viṣṇu, however, in spite of his comparatively subordinate position in RV., began to rise in importance in the time of the Brāhmaṇas, while during the epic and Purāṇic period he rose to the rank of the supreme spirit. The moment which seems to have been in operation during this process of elevation, was reverence for the third step or the mysterious highest abode of Viṣṇu beyond the ken of all. In the Brāhmaṇic period we have the mention of Agni as the lowest of the gods and Viṣṇu as the highest (AB. I. 1). Then we have a story in Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa and Taittiriya-Āraṇyaka of a sacrificial session held by the gods for the attainment of splendour, glory and food. They proposed to themselves that he amongst them, who by his deeds reached the end of the sacrifice before the others, should attain the highest place among them all. Viṣṇu reached the end before the others, and he thus became the highest of the gods; and therefore they say that Viṣṇu is the highest of the gods (SB. XIV. 1. 1). When this was written, Viṣṇu had already attained to the supreme dignity, and the story is invented to account for it. There is again in the same Brāhmaṇa (1. 2. 5) the story of Viṣṇu the dwarf. When the gods and Āsuras were contending for a place of sacrifice, the latter agreed that they would allow as much land for the former as was equal to the size of the dwarf. Viṣṇu was then made to lie down, but gradually he grew so large as to encompass the

whole earth, and so the gods got the whole earth. Here a miraculous power has been attributed to Viṣṇu, though he is not necessarily the Supreme Spirit

In the Maitrī-Upaniṣad ( VI 13 ) food is called the form of Bhagavad-Viṣṇu, which sustains the universe. In the Katha-Upaniṣad ( III 9 ) the progress of the human soul is compared to a journey, and the end of the path which he traverses is called the highest place of Viṣṇu ( Paramam padam ). This is the final goal and the abode of eternal bliss, and the use of the word in this sense lends support to the view that the elevation of Viṣṇu to the dignity of the Supreme Being was due to the fact that the expression was capable of being used to denote this sense. Some time after, Viṣṇu became even a household god. In the ceremony of the seven steps contained in the marriage ritual, the bridegroom has to say to the bride, when she puts forth a step: " May Viṣṇu lead you or be with you " This formula occurs in the Ārṇya-sūtras of Āpastamba, Hiraṇyakeśin and Pāraskara, but not in that of Āśvalāyana. In epic times Viṣṇu grew to be in every respect the Supreme Spirit; and Vāsudeva is identified with Viṣṇu. In chapters 65 and 66 of the Bhīṣmaparvan noticed before,<sup>1</sup> the Supreme Spirit is addressed as Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu and is identified with Vāsudeva.

In the Anugītā portion of the Āśvamedhikaparvan (chap 53-55) Kṛṣṇa, while returning to Dvārakā, meets on the way a sage of the name of Uttanka of the Bṛghu race. The sage asks Kṛṣṇa whether he had established peace between the contending kinsmen, Pāṇḍus and Kuruṣ, and established affectionate relations between them. Kṛṣṇa replies that the Kuruṣ had been destroyed and the Pāṇḍus were in possession of the supreme sovereignty. The sage got angry and said that he would pronounce a curse against Kṛṣṇa, but if he explained to him the philosophy of the soul (Adhyātma), he would desist. Kṛṣṇa then does explain this philosophy at the request of Uttanka and shows him his universal form (Virāṭ svarūpam). The Svarūpa is the same as, or similar to, that shown to Arjuna according to the Bhagavadgītā, but it is here called the Vaiṣṇava form (Rūpa), which name does not occur in the other passage. Thus then between the period of the Bhaga-

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<sup>1</sup> Ante, pp. 13 and ff. [ N. B. U. ]

vadgitā and that of the Anugitā, the identity of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa with Viṣṇu had become an established fact. In the Śāntiparvan ( chap. 43 ) Yudhiṣṭhira addressing Kṛṣṇa sings a hymn of praise, in which Kṛṣṇa is identified with Viṣṇu. In the epic times, Viṣṇu is regarded as the Supreme Spirit, but the names of Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa apparently occur more frequently or are more prominent.

§ 36 Still many parts of the Mahābhārata represent a condition of things in which the divinity Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa was not generally acknowledged. In the above passage from the Anugitā, the sage Uttanka is about to pronounce a curse on Kṛṣṇa, as if he was an ordinary individual, and desists only when his universal form is shown to him. Similarly in many passages noticed by Dr Muir ( O. S. T. IV, pp. 205ff. ) Kṛṣṇa's divinity is denied; and Samjaya and Bhīṣma make strenuous efforts to establish it.

What appears to be the fact is, that the religion of Vāsudeva, in which divine honours were paid to him, was professed by the Sātvatas, as observed in several of the passages noticed above, and its gradual extension to other tribes and people of the country is shadowed forth in these portions of the great epic. In the Purāṇic times, however, the cult of Vāsudeva ceased to be militant, and three streams of religious thought, namely, the one flowing from Viṣṇu, the Vedic god at its source, another from Nārāyaṇa, the cosmic and philosophic god, and the third from Vāsudeva, the historical god, mingled together decisively and thus formed the later Vaiṣṇavism. There is however, a fourth stream, which in modern times in some of the systems of Vaiṣṇavism has acquired an almost exclusive predominance, and to this we shall now direct our attention.

### **IX. Identification of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa with the Cowherd God ( Gopāla-Kṛṣṇa ).**

§ 37. There is no allusion to the cowherd Kṛṣṇa in the authorities we have hitherto quoted. The Inscriptions, the work of Patañjali and even the Nārāyaṇīya itself indicate no knowledge of the existence of such a god. In the last the Avatāra of Vāsudeva is mentioned as having been assumed for the destruction of Kamsa, but of none of the demons whom the cowherd Kṛṣṇa killed in the

cow-settlement (Gokula). The contrast between this and the statements in the Harivamsa (vv 5876-5878), Vācu-Purāṇa, chap. 98, vv 100-102, and Bhāgavata-Purāṇa, II. 7, of Kṛṣṇa's Avatara having been assumed for destroying all the demons that appeared in the cow-settlement as well as of Kāmsa's significance. When these works were written, the legend about the cowherd Kṛṣṇa must have already become current and his identification with Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa been effected. And the story of the Vṛm prince Vāsudeva having been brought up in a cow-settlement is incongruous with his later career as depicted in the Mahābhārata. Nor does any part of it require the presupposition of such a boyhood as has been ascribed to him.

In the Sābhāparvan (chap. 41), however, Sisupāla in traducing Kṛṣṇa alludes to his valorous deeds, such as the killing of Putana and others, which were done in the cow-settlement, and speaks of Bhīṣma's having praised them. But the praise bestowed on Kṛṣṇa by Bhīṣma (chap. 38) does not contain a mention of these deeds. This passage therefore is interpolated.

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1. The Southern Recension of the Mahābhārata contains many interpolations. In the Nārāyaṇīya, chap. 338 of the Northern Recension corresponds to chap. 344 of the Southern. We have six verses in the latter which are not contained in the former. They speak of animals made of their being killed instead of real live animals. This is a later doctrine, which is strongly advocated by the Mādhva Vaiṣṇavas, but denied with as much pertinacity by Śmārtas. In the present case in the Sābhāparvan, chap. 22, vv 27-36 about Kṛṣṇa's doings in Gokula are in S, and not in N. Chapter 23 in S, about Kṛṣṇa's birth and removal to Gokula is not in N. Chapter 24, S, vv 4-5 about Jarāsaṁdhā's declining to fight with Kṛṣṇa, because he was a Gopa, are not found in chap. 24, N, which corresponds to that chapter. Chapters 33 and 34 in S, are not in N. The first is about Sahadeva's expedition to the Pāṇḍya country and the second about Ghaṭotaka's being sent to Lankā and Vibhīṣaṇa's paying tribute out of respect for Kṛṣṇa. At the end of chap. 39 in S, corresponding to chap. 36 in N, there is an interpolated passage, in which the worship done to Kṛṣṇa is decided as having been done to a Gopa or cowherd. This is not found in N. Chapters 42-61 in S, are not found in N. They contain a mention of the Avatāras of Viṣṇu and his exploits in Gokula. Chap. 64 in S, corresponds to chap. 41 in N. Thus attempts have always been made to bring by means of interpolations, the stories told in the Mahābhārata to the form which they subsequently assume. The passage dealt with in the text is a clear interpolation.

The name Govinda does occur in the Bhagavadgītā and other parts of Mahābhārata. It is an ancient name, being derived by a Vārttika on P. III 1 138. If this name was given to Kṛṣṇa, because of his having had to do with cows, while a boy in Gokula, and his previous history in the cow-settlement was known, when the genuine portions of the Mahābhārata were composed, we should have found an etymology of the name expressive of that connection. But, on the contrary, in the Ādiparvan it is stated that Govinda is so called, because in the form of a boar he found the earth (Go) in the waters, which he agitated (chap 21 12); and in the Sāntiparvan (chap 342. 70) Vāsudeva says: "I am called Govinda by the gods, because formerly I found the earth which was lost and lodged in a den". The origin of the name may be traced to this legend, but more probably Govinda is a later form of Govid, which in the Rgveda is used as an epithet of Indra in the sense of 'the finder of the cows'. This epithet, as another, Keśinīśūdana which is also applicable to Indra, must have been transferred to Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, when he came to be looked upon as the chief god.

From all this it appears that the story of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood in the Gokula was unknown till about the beginning of the Christian Era. The Harivaṃśa which is the chief authority for it, contains the word Dināra, corresponding to the Latin word Denarius, and consequently must have been written about the third century of the Christian era. Some time before that the stories of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood must have been current. The nature of the tribe of cowherds among whom Kṛṣṇa lived, is to be gathered from the words of the boy-god addressed to his foster-father Nanda, in order to dissuade him from celebrating a festival to Indra, and induce him to worship the mountain Govardhana instead. "We are cowherds," he says, "wandering in forests, maintaining ourselves on cows, which are our wealth; cows are our deities, and mountains and forests" (H 3808). The cowherds lived in a Ghosa or temporary encampment which was capable of being easily removed from place to place, as when they left Vraja and encamped in Vṛndāvana (H. 3532). Ghosa is defined as Ābhīrapalli, which is generally understood as the enclosure of cowherds.

But the original signification of the word Ābhira is not a cow.

herd. It is the name of a race, whose original occupation was the tending of cows; and consequently the name became in later times equivalent to a 'cowherd'. For these reasons the cowherds among whom the boy-god Kṛṣṇa lived, belong to a nomadic tribe of the name of Ābhīras. These Ābhīras occupied the tract of country from Madhuvana near Mathurā to Anūpa and Ānarta, the regions about Dvārakā (H. 5161-5163). The Ābhīras are mentioned in the Mahābhārata (Mausalaparvan, chap. 7) as having attacked Arjuna, who was carrying the women of the Vṛṣṇis from Dvārakā to Kuruksetra after the extinction of the male members of the Vṛṣṇi race. They are described as robbers and Mlecchas, and lived near Pañcanada, which is probably Punjab. The Viṣṇu-Purāṇa locates them near the Aparāntas (Konkan) and Saurāstras, and Varāhamihira assigns them nearly the same position. Though they are mentioned as the southern people (Br. S. 14. 12), and as living in the southwest (Br. S. 14. 18), the Ābhīras must have migrated in large hordes into the country. They were at first mere nomads and afterwards settled in the country from about the eastern confines of the Punjab to the vicinity of Mathurā and in the south up to Saurāstra and Kathiavad. i. e., they must have occupied the whole of Rāputāna and a tract to the northeast of it. After they were settled, they took to various occupations, one of which was of course the old one, namely the tending of cows.

The descendants of the old Ābhīras are called Āhīras at the present day, and we have now Āhīras following the occupation of carpenters, goldsmiths, cowherds and even priesthood. At one time they founded a kingdom in the northern part of the Maratha country, and an Inscription of the ninth year of the Ābhīra king Śīvarasena, the son of Ābhīra Śīvadatta, is found at Nasik<sup>1</sup>. From the form of the characters the Inscription probably belongs to the end of the third century. The Purāṇas mention a dynasty of Ābhīras composed of ten princes<sup>2</sup>. Another Inscription of an earlier date is found at Gundā<sup>3</sup> in Kathiavad, in which the charities of Rudrabhūti, a general, who is called an Ābhīra, are mentioned. The Inscription belongs to the reign of a Ksatrapa

1 Lüders, List of Brāhmī Inscriptions, Nr. 1137.

2 See Vāyu-Purāṇa, vol. II, chap. 37, page 453, Bibl. Ind.

3 Lüders, List of Brāhmī Inscriptions, Nr. 963.

king of the name of Rudrasimha, who held power in Śaka 102 corresponding to 180 A. D.

If then about the end of the second century and in the third, the Ābhīras enjoyed high political position, they must have migrated into the country in the first century. They probably brought with them the worship of the boy-god and the story of his humble birth, his reputed father's knowledge that he was not his son, and the massacre of the innocents. The two last correspond to Nanda's knowing that he was not the father of Kṛṣṇa and Kamsa's killing all children. The stories of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood, such as that of killing Dhenuka, a demon in the form of a wild ass, were brought by Ābhīras<sup>1</sup>, and others were developed after they came to India. It is possible that they brought with them the name Christ also, and this name probably led to the identification of the boy-god with Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa. The Goanese and the Bengalis often pronounce the name Kṛṣṇa as Kusto or Kṛiṣṭo, and so the Christ of the Ābhīras was recognised as the Sanskrit Kṛṣṇa.

The dalliance of Kṛṣṇa with cowherdesses, which introduced an element inconsistent with the advance of morality into the Vāsudeva religion, was also an after-growth, consequent upon the freer intercourse between the wandering Ābhīras and their more civilised Āryan neighbours. Morality cannot be expected to be high or strict among races in the condition of the Ābhīras at the time; and their gay neighbours took advantage of its looseness. Besides, the Ābhīra women must have been fair and handsome as those of the Āhir-Gavaliyas or cowherds of the present day are.

§ 38. The story in the Buddhistic Ghatajātaka represents Vāsudeva and his brothers to be the sons of Kamsa's sister Devagabbhā and Ūpasāgara. They were made over to a man of the name of Andhakaveṇhu and to his wife Nandagopā who was the attendant of Devagabbhā. In this version there is a reminiscence of Devaki in the name Devagabbhā; and Nanda and Yaśodā or Gopā of Gokula are compounded together to form the name of the maid-servant who brought up Devagabbhā's sons as

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1 Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1907, p. 981.

her sons. And in *Andhakaveṇṭu* the names of the two kindred Yādava tribes, *Andhaka* and *Vṛṣṇi*, are compounded together, and the compound becomes the name of the husband of the maid-servant. Now as *Andhaka* and *Vṛṣṇi* were according to the highest authorities two distinct names, and were the names of the two tribes, this story contains a confused reminiscence of the true legend and was of a later growth. All the *Jātakas* were not written at one and the same time. While some belong to a pre-Christian period, others must be assigned to post-Christian times; and the *Ghatajātaka* appears to me to belong to the latter class. The compound *Nandagopā*, therefore, though it contains a clear reminiscence of the foster-parents of the boy-god *Kṛṣṇa*, cannot be considered to point to a pre-Christian period for the identification of *Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa* with *Gopāla-Kṛṣṇa*.

## X. The Pāñcarātra or Bhāgavata System.

§ 39. We have thus gone over the last element which goes to form the *Vaiṣṇavism* of the later times. That element, however, does not form a prominent part, or forms no part at all, of the systems which are based upon the old *Pāñcarātra* doctrines. As we have seen, the *Ekāntika* Dharma or monotheistic religion was that which was promulgated by the *Bhāgavadgītā*; but the *Pāñcarātra* system, consisting, as it did, of the worship of *Vāsudeva* and his several forms, shows no organic connexion with that work, though *Bhakti* or devotion is common to both. That system must have developed in about the third century B. C., as we have already seen from the Inscriptions and passages in books referred to before. Their being free from the *Gopāla-Kṛṣṇa* element is thus intelligible, and the later *Vaiṣṇava* systems, such as that of *Rāmānuja* and *Madhva*, which more or less recognise the old *Bhāgavata* doctrines or ideas, have entirely neglected that element. In other systems, however, it is recognised and in a general way in popular *Vaiṣṇavism*.

The authorities on which the *Bhāgavata* system was based are the *Pāñcarātra-Saṃhitās*; and *Rāmānuja* in his comments on the *Brahmasūtras*, II. 2. 39-42, quotes from some of these. The first quotation is from the *Pauṣkara-Saṃhitā*, which is intended to show that, when *Brāhmanas* worship the fourfold soul with the

traditional names, it should be considered authoritative. The second is from the Sātvata-Samhitā, which is to the effect that this great Śāstra contains the secret of Brahman and imparts discrimination to Brāhmaṇas who worship the true Brahman bearing the name of Vāsudeva. There are two from the Parama-Samhitā. One of these gives the nature of Prakṛti, which is un sentient, of use to another than "itself", eternal, always changeable, composed of three qualities, and is the sphere within which the action of agents is done. The other represents somebody, probably Śāṇḍilya himself, as saying that he has studied all the Vedas with the dependent treatises and Vākovākya, but not having found the way to supreme bliss clearly stated in them.

One of these Samhitās, bearing the name of Sātvata, has been printed and is available. It begins by saying that Nārada saw Paraśurāma on the Malaya Mountain and was told by him to visit the Rsis, who were in search of the place of Hari, and to instruct them in the Sātvata method of worship (Kriyāmārga). Nārada does this and explains to them the secret traditional methods (Rahasyāmnāya). Nārāyaṇa is spoken of here as the supreme spirit. The secret methods were formerly explained by the bearer of the discus (Vāsudeva), when asked by Saṁkarsana. Saṁkarsana spoke to Viṣṇu at the beginning of the Tretā age, asking why his countenance had become red. The answer is: 'Because the people will be afflicted with passion in this age'. Being asked how they will be delivered from passion, Saṁkarsana is told that they will be delivered by adoring the eternal and highest Brahman in three ways. The Supreme Spirit, who has hands and feet and eyes everywhere and is endowed with six Guṇas or qualities, is Para or the Highest. It is one and the support of all. Besides this there is a triad, each member of which is distinguished from the others by a distinction in knowledge and other qualities. These three should be known as Vyūhas, or forms, who confer the desired fruit with ease.

Balarāma then asks about the mode of service. Bhagvat then explains it as follows:— "When the pure Brahman, which is the aim and end of the creation, exists in the heart of qualified Brāhmaṇas, who worship Vāsudeva, the highest Śāstra, which is a

great Upaniṣad of Brahman, springs forth from it for the redemption of the world and confers discrimination; it contains divine methods and has for its fruit final deliverance'. I will then explain that to you which is of various kinds. This Sāstra, along with Rahasya, is fruitful to those who have gone through Yoga with its eight parts, and whose soul is devoted to mental sacrifice. The Yogins, who are Brāhmanas guided by the Vedas and who have given up the mixed worship, are competent for the worship of the single one, dwelling in the heart. The three orders, Kṣatriya and others, and those who are Prapanna or have resorted to self-surrender are competent for the worship of the four Vyūhas accompanied by Mantras, and also unaccompanied by them, so far as regards the series of ceremonies concerning the four Vyūhas as well as the actions and the collection of Mantras concerning the Vibhavas<sup>2</sup>. All these persons should be free from attachment and absorbed in the performance of their duties and be devotees of the supreme lord by their deeds, words and mind. In this manner, the four (orders) become competent, when they are initiated (for service) with Mantras. Hear now the process concerning the single form". Then follows the statement of the mystic arrangement of letters and formulae and the meditations. This work throughout contains the mystic modes of worship by means of Mantras variously arranged

The allusion at the end of Chapter 66 of the Bhīṣmaparvan to Saṁkarsana's having sung or expounded Vāsudeva according to the Sātvata rites (Vidhi) refers in all probability to such rites as are detailed in this Sātvata-Saṁhitā.

Samkarācārya, in his notice of the Bhāgavata School under Br. S. II. 2. 42, gives five methods of worshipping the supreme lord, Bhagavat Vāsudeva, in his fourfold form, which, along with the explanations given by the commentators, are as follows:— (1) Abhigamana or going to the temple of the deity with the speech, the body and the mind centred on him; (2) Upādāna or collecting the materials of worship; (3) Ijyā or worship; (4) Svādhyāya or the muttering of the usual Mantra; (5) Yoga or

1. Two lines out of this are contained in the quotations from Rāṅgānāja given above

2. Vibhavas are the incarnations of the Supreme Spirit.

meditation By worshipping him in these ways for a hundred years all sin is destroyed and the devotee reaches Bhaṣavat.

§ 40 The book called *Nāradapañcarātra*, published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, contains the *Saṁhitā* called *Jñānāmṛta-sāra*. The glories of the boy Kṛṣṇa are sung in this work. Nārada desiring to know Kṛṣṇa's greatness and the methods of his worship is recommended to go to Śaṁkara, or Śiva, and seek instruction from him. Nārada repairs to Kailāsa and enters the palace of Śaṁkara, which has seven gates. At these gates there are pictures and sculptures relating to the scenes of Kṛṣṇa's childhood and his various deeds in the cow-settlement, such as Vṛndāvana, Yamunā, Kṛṣṇa's sitting on the Kadamba tree with the garments of the cowherdresses and their return from bath in the Yamunā river in a naked condition, the destruction of the serpent Kālīya, the holding up of the Govardhana mountain on the palm of his hand, the journey to Mathurā and the lamentations of the Gopīs and his foster-parents, etc. Sculptures representing some of these events were discovered on a pillar excavated at Mandor near Jodhpur about two years ago<sup>1</sup>. The age of the pillar has been considered not earlier than the fourth century A. D. The idea of imagining such sculptures on the gates of Śiva's palace could have occurred to a writer only when the practice of adorning gates and pillars with such sculptures had become general. The *Jñānāmṛta-sāra*, therefore, could not have been earlier than the fourth century and appears to me to be considerably later, as will be presently shown.

Goloka or the world of cows is the heaven in which Kṛṣṇa dwells and which is reached by those who adore him, and several Mantras are given in this book, the reciters of which are rewarded with a place in that heaven. The servitude of Hari through devotion is the highest Mukti or absolution according to this work. There are six modes of adoring Hari; viz., ( 1 ) remembrance of him, ( 2 ) utterance, ( of his name and glory ), ( 3 ) salutation, ( 4 ) resorting to his feet, ( 5 ) constant worship of him with devotion, and ( 6 ) surrender of the whole soul to him. The *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* adds three more, viz., hearing, ( his praise ), servitude, and companionship ( *Sakhyam* ). These last two are preliminary to

1. Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1905-1906, p. 135ff.

§ [ R. G. Bhandarkar's Works Vol. IV. ]

the surrendering of the whole soul. In this book Rādhā is mentioned as the highest of the women whom Kṛṣṇa loved, and she is represented as having been formed by the original lord becoming two, one of which was Rādhā (II 3. 21ff.). The exaltation of this woman is thus one of the main objects of this Samhitā.

The Samhitā we have been considering, seems thus to be entirely devoted to the advancement of the cult of the Kṛṣṇa of the cow-settlement or Gokula and of his beloved mistress Rādhā, now raised to the dignity of his eternal consort. The Vyūhas which form a peculiarity of the Pāñcarātra School, are not mentioned in it. The creed afterwards promulgated by Vallabhācārya is exactly similar to that set forth in this book. This Samhitā, therefore, must have been written a short time before Vallabha, that is about the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Rāmānujyas consider this Samhitā to be apocryphal.

### **XI. The Avatāras of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa.**

§ 41 An Avatāra or incarnation of a god differs from mere identification of two gods in this, that in the former case the god that is considered an incarnation acts like a human being, or even a brute, at the same time that he has the miraculous powers of a god. The transition, however, from the idea of identification to that of incarnation is easy. The person in the flesh is identified with the god who is a mere spirit, so that the habit of thought which in Vedic times led to the identification of some of the Vedic deities with Agni, has been at work even in this conception of the Avatāras.

The Avatāras of Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu are variously given by the various authorities. In the passage in the Nārāyaṇīya translated above,<sup>1</sup> six only are given, viz, the boar, the man-lion, the dwarf, Rāma of the Bhṛgu race, Rāma Dāśarathī and that assumed for the destruction of Kamsa (Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa). This passage is followed after a short interval by another in which the incarnations are given as ten, the additions being Hamsa (swan), Kūrma (tortoise), and Matsya (fish) in the beginning and Kalkin at the end. The one preceding Kalkin is called Satvata, i. e., Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa. This passage, following so closely on the

1. Ante, p. 9 [ F. B. U. ]

first, appears to be interpolated when the number of Avatāras became fixed at ten.

The *Harivaṁśa* mentions the six given in the first of these two passages. The *Vāyu-Purāṇa* gives the incarnations in two passages ( Chap. 97, vv. 72ff. and Chap. 98, vv. 63ff. ), in the first of which there are twelve, but some of them appear rather to be incarnations of Śiva and Indra. In the second the number ten, which about that time must have come into usage, is made up by adding to the six mentioned above the four: Dattātreya, one unnamed called the fifth, Vedavyāsa, and Kalkin. In the *Varāha-Purāṇa* we have the ten incarnations which came to be accepted later, containing the Fish, Tortoise, Buddha, and Kalkin, in addition to the six mentioned above. The *Agni-Purāṇa* gives the same ten.

The *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* enumerates the incarnations in three different passages. In the first, contained in Chapter 3 of Book I, twenty-two are mentioned. In the passage in Chapter 7 of Book II, we have twenty-three, and in Chapter 4 of Book XI, sixteen are given. It deserves notice that among the Avatāras mentioned in this *Purāṇa* are Sanatkumāra; the divine sage (Nārada), who expounded the Sātvata system; Kapila who explained to Āsuri the Sāṃkhya system, which determines the collection of principles; Dattātreya, who is represented to have taught Ānvikṣiki to Alarka and the Prahrāda and the attainment of excellence by means of Yoga to Yadu and Haihaya; Rṣabha, son of Nābhi and Merudevi, who abandoned attachment to all things, acquired serenity, and looking at all things alike and possessing Yoga power, acted as if he were a non-living creature; and lastly Dhanvantari, the teacher of the science of medicine.

Rṣabha, from the parentage given here and other indications, appears clearly to be the same as the first Tirthamkara of the Jains. He was probably raised to the dignity of an incarnation as the Buddha of the Buddhists was. There is hardly a wide-spread cult of any of these incarnations except Dattātreya, who is adored and worshipped by a large number of people to this day, and Rāma of whom more will have to be said hereafter. Kṛṣṇa, of course, though included in the Avatāras stands on independent grounds and his worship over the widest area is due, not to his having been con-

sidered an Avatāra, but to his being the peculiar object of adoration of the followers of a new religion or religious reform, as I have ventured to call it, which first took its rise among the Sātvatas.

## XII. Later Traces of the Bhāgavata School; and General Vaiṣṇavism.

§ 42. We will now resume the chronological thread we have traced from Megasthenes to the latest Inscription, that at Nanaghat, which is to be referred to the first century B. C. For about four centuries after this there are no epigraphical or sculptural traces of any Brāhmanic religious system; and they reappear about the time when the Guptas rose to power in the first quarter of the fourth century. The Gupta princes, Candragupta II, Kumāragupta, and Skandagupta, are styled Paramabhāgavatas on their coins. They were thus worshippers of Bhagavat or Vāsudeva. Their dates range from 400 to 464 A. D.

On a panel at Udayagiri, there is a figure of a four-armed god, who is probably Viṣṇu. The Inscription below bears the date 82 G. E., i. e., 400 A. D.<sup>1</sup>

There is a pillar at Bhtari in the Ghazipur District of the U. P., on which there is an Inscription which records the installation of an image of Śārṅga and the grant of a village for its worship by Skandagupta, whose dates range between 454 and 464 A. D.<sup>2</sup> Śārṅga must have been Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, Skandagupta himself being a Bhāgavata.

A temple of Viṣṇu was erected in 456 A. D. by Cakrapālita, son of Parnadatta, appointed viceroy of Surāstra or Kathiavāḍ by Skandagupta. The Inscription, which records this, opens with an invocation of Viṣṇu in the Vāmana or the dwarf incarnation<sup>3</sup>.

In an Inscription at Eran in the Saṅar district, C. P., belonging to the reign of Budhagupta and bearing the date 165 G. E., corresponding to 483 A. D., Mātriviṣṇu and his younger brother Dhanyaviṣṇu are represented to have erected a Dhvajastambha or flag-

1. Corp. Inscr. Ind. Vol. III, p. 21ff.

2. Ibid. p. 52ff.

3. Ibid. p. 56ff.

staff in honour of the god Janārdana. Mātṛvisnu is called a great devotee of Bhagavat (Aṭyanta-Bhagavad-bhakta)<sup>1</sup>. The god Janārdana must therefore be Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa.

A copper-plate Inscription of A. D. 495, found near the village of Khoh in Baghelkhand, records the grant of a village, by a chief named Jayanātha, to Bhagavat for repairs to the temple of that god and for the performance of ordinary ceremonies<sup>2</sup>.

An Inscription on an iron pillar near Kutub Minar at Delhi speaks of that pillar as a flag-staff to Visnu erected by a great king named Candra, who enjoyed universal sovereignty and was a great devotee of Visnu. The Inscription is not dated, but if the Candra referred to here was Candragupta II, it belongs to the latter part of the fourth century or the beginning of the fifth<sup>3</sup>.

In his Meghadūta (v. 15) Kālidāsa compares the cloud adorned with a piece of a rain-bow, with Visnu in the shape of the cow-herd adorned with a shining peacock feather. Here there is an identification of Gopāla-Kṛṣṇa with Visnu; and, if the Vikramāditya who was the patron of Kālidāsa was Candragupta II of the Gupta Dynasty, this must be considered to be a record belonging to the early part of the fifth century.

We have already alluded to the sculptures on a pillar excavated at Mandor near Jodhpur. These sculptures represent the overturning of a cart by the baby Kṛṣṇa, the holding of the Govardhana Mountain by Kṛṣṇa on the palm of his hand, and such other events. I refer them tentatively to the fifth century.

In Śaka 500, Mangaliśa, a prince belonging to the early Calukya dynasty of the Deccan, got a cave scooped out, in which a temple to Visnu was constructed, and an image of Visnu was installed in it. The provision for the performance of Nārāyaṇa-bali (offerings to Nārāyaṇa) was made by assigning the revenues of a village for the purpose<sup>4</sup>. In this cave-temple there are figures of Visnu and Nārāyaṇa lying on the body of a serpent, with Lakṣmī rubbing his feet, and of the Boar and Narasimha incarna-

1. Ibid p. 88ff

2. Ibid. p. 121ff.

3. Ibid. p. 139ff.

4. Ind. Ant. Vol. III. p. 305; Vol. VI, p. 363.

tions, and of Harihara in which the peculiar marks of Hari, or Viṣṇu, and of Hara, or Śiva, are combined'.

In mentioning the priests who are qualified to install and consecrate the images of certain gods, Varāhamihira says that this function in the case of Viṣṇu should be assigned to Bhāgavatas.<sup>1</sup> Bhāgavatas were thus recognised in his time as the peculiar worshippers of Viṣṇu. Varāhamihira died in Śaka 500, i.e. 387 A.D.<sup>2</sup>

Amarasinha, the author of the well-known *Kosa* or thesaurus, was a Buddhist. After giving the words expressive of gods generally, when he comes to the names of particular gods, he begins by giving those of Buddha and proceeds next to give the names Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa etc., of which we have thirty-nine. After finishing these he says that Vāsudeva was his father. This means that the thirty-nine names previously given are the names of Vāsudeva. If we examine these, we shall find that before Amara's time Vāsudeva had already been identified with Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa. Except the name Dāmodara, there is no other connecting Vāsudeva with Gokula, and the etymology of Dāmodara which connects him with that cow-settlement is doubtful. While Kamsārātri, or the enemy of Kamsa, does occur, we have no such name as Pūtānāri, the enemy of Pūtānā, or any other derived from the names of the many demons he slew while he was a boy. There are also no names of incarnations except the doubtful one, Balidhvamsin, which however, has been interpreted by one commentator as the destroyer of ignorance by means of Pāli or oblations. There are, of course, several names derived from those of other demons, such as Madhuripu and Kāṭabhejīr, but these are not the enemies destroyed by Viṣṇu in his incarnations as they are usually mentioned. After giving the name of the father of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, Amara proceeds to mention those of Saṁkarāṇa, or Baladeva, and afterwards of Pradyumna and Aniruddha. Thereafter he mentions those of Lakṣmī, the wife of Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, then those of the weapons of the god and his ornaments, and ends with the names of Garuḍa, the vehicle of Viṣṇu. After

1. Fergusson and Burgess, *Cave Temples*, p. 407.

2. Br. S. 60 19.

3. Bhau Daj. Lit. Remains, p. 240.

finishing these he proceeds to the other great god of the Hindus, Sambhu or Śiva.

Here Amara appears clearly to have in view the four forms, or Vyūhas, or Vāsudeva recognised by the Bhāgavatas, so that in his time the prevalent form of Vaiṣṇavism was that embraced by the Bhāgavatas. Amara's exact age is doubtful, but, if he was a Buddhist, he must have belonged to the Mahāyāna sect, the sacred language of which was Sanskrit. This system was in full swing in the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries<sup>1</sup>. Amarasimha, therefore, must have flourished in this last century, or, if we believe in the traditional verse which asserts his contemporaneity with Kālidāsa and in Candragupta II as Vikramāditya, the famous patron of learning, he must have flourished in the early part of the fifth century. The identity of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa with Gopāla-Kṛṣṇa is very rarely alluded to, while that with Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa is clearly set forth.

About the middle of the seventh century, Bāṇa in his *Harṣacarita* represents a sage of the name of Divākaramitra, who, originally a Brāhmaṇa, became a Buddhist, as being surrounded in the Vindhya mountains, where he had his abode, by followers of a number of sects two of which were the Bhāgavatas and Pāñcarātras.

In the Daśavatāra temple at Ellora there is a figure of Viṣṇu on the body of a serpent with Lakṣmī rubbing his feet and Brahmā seated on a lotus coming out of his navel. There are also images of the Narasimha, Vāmana and Varāha incarnations, as well as of Kṛṣṇa holding the Govardhana Mountain over the flocks of the cow-settlement. This temple was constructed about the middle of the eighth century in the time of Dantidurga of the Rāstrakūṭa race. There are similar figures of Avatāras in the Kailāsa temple scooped out in the later part of the eighth century, in the time of Kṛṣṇa I, uncle of Dantidurga. Among these is also the scene of the destruction of Kāliya by Kṛṣṇa.

There is an inscription in a cave at Pabhosa, about 32 miles south-west of Allahabad, which probably had a human figure above and runs thus. "The maker of the images of Śrī-Kṛṣṇa and

1. Vide my 'Peep into the Early History of India', JBBRAS, Vol. XX, p. 305;  
[ = Volume I of this Edition, p. 45 N. B. U. ]

the milk-maids". The date is uncertain, but the Inscription is referred to the seventh or eighth century by Bühler<sup>1</sup>

At Sirpur in the Raipur district, C. P. over the front of a shrine-door there is a sculpture of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa reclining on the folds of the serpent Śeṣa, and from his navel springs a lotus on which is seated Brahmā. Down the two outer sides of the shrine-door are some of the incarnations of Viṣṇu, one of which is that of Rāma and another of Buddha, whose image is in the usual meditative attitude. The temple belongs probably to the eighth century<sup>2</sup>.

At Osia, 32 miles north of Jodhpūr, there is an old temple adjoining to the house of the local Jahagīrdar. On two pilasters, projecting from the shrine into the Sabhāmaṇḍapa, are two images of deities both seated on Garuda. Both have four hands, but one of them holds a conch-shell, the discus, the mace and the lotus, and the other bears a plough-share and a mace in his two hands, the other two being empty. The last has his head canopied by a five-hooded serpent. They are apparently Vāsudeva and Saṅkarṣaṇa. The temple cannot be later than the ninth century<sup>3</sup>.

In a work called Dharmaparīkṣā, Amitagatī, the author, who was a Digambara Jaina, says that there were according to the legendary lore current among the Jainas sixty-three eminent men: the twelve supreme sovereigns, the twenty-four Arhats (Jinas), and nine Rāmas, nine Keśavas, and the nine enemies of these nine. The last of the Viṣṇus (Keśavas) was the son of Vasudeva, and his Brāhmaṇa devotees call him the pure, the supreme being. They say: "He who meditates upon the god Viṣṇu, who is all-pervading, a whole without parts, indestructible and unchangeable, who frees a man from old age and death, is free from misery". He is traditionally known to have ten forms or incarnations. These ten forms are the same as mentioned in the Varāha and Agni-Purāṇas<sup>4</sup> and which are now generally accepted. Thus Buddha had come to be recognised as an incarnation of Viṣṇu before

1. Ep. Ind., Vol. II p., 482.

2. Annual Progress Report of Archaeological Survey, Western Circle, for 1903-04, p. 21.

3. See the forthcoming Annual Report of the Arch. Surv. of India [This note is printed as in the original Edition.—N. B. U.]

4. See above [p. 59 N. B. U.]

the date of the Dharmaparīksā, which is Vikrama 1070, corresponding to 1014 A. D. If the approximate date assigned to the temple at Sirpur is correct, Buddha must have been admitted into the Brāhmanic pantheon before the eighth century. Amitagati also speaks of the mighty Visnu having become a cowherd in Nanda's Gokula and of the all-knowing, all-pervading protector of the world ( Rāma ) as being oppressed by the fire of separation from Sitā like a mortal lover.<sup>1</sup>

Hence, we have evidence of the existence of the cult of Visnu, principally in accordance with the mode professed by the Bhāgavatas from the fourth to the eleventh century. The doctrine of the incarnations had also become an article of ordinary faith, and the founder of Buddhism and the first Tīrthamkara of the Jainas also came later to be recognised as incarnations of Visnu.

### XIII. The Cult of Rāma.

§ 43. The architectural remains passed under review contain only figures of the incarnations of Visnu and are not to be taken as proving the existence of the cult of any of these incarnations. But at the present day the cult of Rāma exists over a pretty wide area. In the temples and other religious structures hitherto noticed, there is none dedicated to his worship nor any flag-staff like those erected in honour of Janārdana or Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa. Rāma, however, was considered as an incarnation of Visnu even in very early times. There are passages in the Rāmāyana pointing to this, but there is good reason to believe that they are spurious or interpolated. But the passage in the Nārāyaṇīya, which we have frequently referred to, contains his name, and so do all the Purāṇas that have been noticed. These in themselves are not sufficient to enable us to determine approximately the period in which he came to be regarded as an incarnation. But in the tenth chapter of the Raghuvamśa the story of the birth of Rāma is preceded by the usual appeal to Visnu or Nārāyaṇa lying on the body of the great serpent, with Lakṣmī rubbing his feet, in the milky ocean and his promise to be born as a son of Daśaratha for the destruction of Rāvana.

<sup>1</sup> For Amitagati's work, see Vol. II of this edition, pp. 308ff. [ N. B. U. ]

<sup>2</sup> [ R. G. Bhandarkar's Works, Vol. IV. ]

Amitagatī also speaks in 1014 A. D. as we have seen<sup>1</sup>, of Rāma's being regarded as the all-knowing, all-pervading protector of the world. The Vāyu-Purāṇa, which is the earliest work of that class, must have been written about the fifth century; so that the belief in Rāma's being an incarnation of Viṣṇu existed in all probability in the early centuries of the Christian Era. But there is no mention of his name in such a work as that of Patañjali, nor is there any old Inscription in which it occurs. Amarasiṃha, too, has no place for him in his scheme of Brāhmanic gods. These circumstances, as well as those mentioned above, show that, though he was regarded as an Avatāra, there was no cult in his honour. Still, as depicted by Vālmiki, Rāma was a high-souled hero, and poets, including those nameless ones who wrote Purāṇas in the names of old Rsis, particularly Bhavabhūti, still more highly exalted his character. Rāma, therefore, won a place in the heart of the Indian people, and that must have soon led to the foundation of the cult. But when this took place it is difficult to say. Madhva or Ānandatīrtha, the founder of a sect to be noticed hereafter, is represented to have brought the image of Digvijaya Rāma from Badarikāśrama and sent Naraharī-tīrtha to Jagannātha about the year 1264 A. D.<sup>2</sup>, to bring what was called the original idols of Rāma and Sītā. The cult of Rāma, therefore, must have come into existence about the eleventh century. There exist manuals giving the modes of worship by means of Mantras or formulae and magic circles, like those prescribed in the Sātvata-Saṃhitā for the worship of Vāsudeva. The ceremony in connection with his birth on the 9th of the bright half of Caitra is given in his Vratakhaṇḍa<sup>3</sup> by Hemādri, who flourished in the thirteenth century. That writer, as well as Vyddha-Hārīta<sup>4</sup>, gives the modes of worshipping him as an incarnation along with others on certain occasions, so that it appears that his worship as an incarnation has been of a longer duration than that based on terms of equality with Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa.

Twenty-four images, differing from each other in the order in which the four objects, viz., the conch-shell, discus, mace

<sup>1</sup> Ante, p. 64 [ N. B. U. ]

<sup>2</sup> See below.

<sup>3</sup> P. 941 ( Bibl. Ind. ).

<sup>4</sup> Vratakhaṇḍa pp. 1094ff.; Vyddha-Hārīta-Smṛti ( Ānandatīrtha Sanskrit Series ), chap. X, v. 145.

and lotus, are placed in the four hands of the principal god Vāsudeva or Visnu, are mentioned by both those authors, and the twenty-four names<sup>1</sup> corresponding to the twenty-four images. Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, Govinda, etc., which include those of the four Vyūhas, are repeated by us at the beginning of every ceremony that we perform at the present day; that is, obeisance is made to the twenty-four forms of the god by using the word Namaḥ (salutations) after the 'dative of each of the names, and the sense is 'Salutations to Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, etc.'. The name of Rāma, however, is not included in them, while two other Avatāras, Narasimha and Vāmana, are mentioned. Every Śrāddha ceremony is wound up by the expression "May Janārdana-Vāsudeva, who is a form of the ancestors, or the father, grandfather and great grandfather, be satisfied by this act". All this shows that Vāsudevism has penetrated into every one of our ordinary ceremonies, which include a repetition even of Vedic Mantras. while this is not at all the case with the cult of Rāma, which is, therefore of a modern growth.

There is a work, entitled the Adhyātma-Rāmāvana, which Ekanātha<sup>2</sup>, a Mahārāstra saint, who flourished in the sixteenth century, calls a modern treatise, composed of excerpts from older writings and having no pretence to be considered as emanating from the old Rsis. The object of this work throughout has been to set forth the divinity of Rāma. The first book of it comprises what is called Rāmahrdaya, which was narrated to Hanumat by Sītā, who says that as the original Prakṛti, she does every thing and did all the deeds mentioned in the Rāmāyana, while Rāma as the only existing soul is inactive, unchangeable and blessed, and is a mere witness of her deeds. After she has concluded, Rāma explains the threefold nature of the knowing spirit, viz., (1) the original," (2) that conditioned by Buddhi or

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1 (1) Keśava, (2) Nārāyaṇa, (3) Mādhava, (4) Govinda, (5) Viṣṇu, (6) Madhusūdana, (7) Trivikrama, (8) Vāmana, (9) Śrīdhara, (10) Hṛṣikeśa, (11) Padmanābha, (12) Dāmodara, (13) Saṁkarsaṇa, (14) Vāsudeva, (15) Pradyumna, (16) Anuruddha, (17) Puruṣottama, (18) Adhokṣaja, (19) Narasimha, (20) Ayaṭa, (21) Janārdana, (22) Upendra, (23) Hari, (24) Śaṅkṛṣṇa.

2 See his Bhāvārtha-Rāmāyaṇa, Āraṇyakāṇḍa.

finite intelligence, and (3) the appearances, the last two of which are fictitious. The fifth canto of the last book is styled Rāmagitā, which is meant to correspond to the Bhāgavadgītā of Vāsudeva and which is narrated by Rāma to Lakṣmana, who takes the place of Arjuna. The doctrine is thoroughly dualistic as that of the previous portion. The world and the individual soul are illusory, and one spirit alone exists. There is another book called Rāmagitā published in Madras, which represents itself to be contained in a larger work called Sattvapārāyana and is composed of eighteen chapters like the genuine Bhāgavadgītā. It is narrated to Hanūmat by Rāma. In the beginning it professes itself to be based on the one hundred and eight Upanisads, some of which are manifestly very recent. This work, therefore, must be a very modern compilation. Thus the works designed to give importance to Rāma as a religious teacher are of recent origin.

#### **XIV. Vāsudevism or Vaiṣṇavism in the South.**

§ 44. We have seen that Śaṅkarsana and Vāsudeva had come to be worshipped as gods in the Maratha country by about the first century B. C. The cult must have spread further south up to the Tamil country, but there is no evidence to show at what time it was introduced there. The Bhāgavats-Purāna (Book XI, chap. 5, vv. 38-40) says, in the usual prophetic style, that in the Kali age there will be found men here and there devoted to Nārāyana, but in large numbers in the Dravida country, where flow the rivers Tāmraparni, Kāveri and others, and that those who drink the water of these rivers will mostly be pure-hearted devotees of Vāsudeva. When the Purāna goes out of its beaten track to make such a statement as this, the fame of the devotees of Vāsudeva, who had flourished in the Tamil country, must have spread over either parts of India when the Purāna was compiled. The Purāna was regarded as sacred in the thirteenth century, when Ānandatīrtha, who flourished between about 1199 and 1278 A.D., places it on the same level as the Mahābhārata and devotes a treatise to the determination of its drift, as to that of the latter. About the same time Bopadeva prepared an abstract of it at the request of the councillor Hemādri. The Bhāgavata, therefore, must have been composed at the least

ries before Ānandatīrtha to account for the reputation of character which it acquired in his time. It cannot be older, for its style often looks modern and in copying older Purāṇas it falls into mistakes, such as the one it by me in another place'. The Dravida devotees, therefore in the Bhāgavata, must have mostly flourished before the 12th century.

devotees, who are known by the name of Ālvārs, usually reckoned as twelve in number and are divided into classes by S. Kṛṣṇaswami Aiyangar<sup>2</sup> in accordance with the received chronology which he follows to determine their sequence, though in itself it assigns a preposterously early date to them. Their names, Tamil and Sanskrit, are

Tamil name	Sanskrit name
{ Poygai Ālvār	Saroyogin
{ Bhūtattār	Bhūtayogin
{ Pey Ālvār	Mahadyogin or Bhrāntayogin
{ Tirumalīsai Ālvār	Bhaktisāra
{ Namm Ālvār	Śathakopa
	Madhurakavi
	Kulaśekhara
{ Periy Ālvār	Viṣṇuśiṭṭa
{ Andāl	Godā
{ Tondaradippodī	Bhaktāṅghrīrenu
{ Tiruppān Ālvār	Yogivāhana
{ Tirumangai Ālvār	Parakāla

date of the first, ordinarily given, is B. C. 4203 and of the second 2706, and the others range between these two. Not only is the sequence fanciful, but even the sequence shown above is unlikely. Kṛṣṇaswami places the last in the earlier half of the 12th century A. D., and all the preceding ones impliedly before it. But there is distinct evidence to show that Kulaśekhara lived much later. He was a king of Travancore, and one of

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story of the Deccan ( Second Edition ), pp. 32-33. [= Vol. III, p. 46 of the 1st edition.—N. B. U.]

Vol. XXXV, p. 228.

the works composed by him styled *Mukundamālā* contains a verse from the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* ( XI. 2. 36 )<sup>1</sup>.

Again in an Inscription on a tablet, existing in a temple at *Narēgal* in the *Dharwar* district, translated by Dr. Fleet<sup>2</sup>, it is stated that *Permādi* of the *Sinda* dynasty vanquished *Kulaśekharaṅka*, besieged *Chatta*, pursued *Jayakeśin*, and seized upon the royal power of *Poysala* and invested *Dhorasamudra*, the capital of the *Poysala* dynasty. In another Inscription<sup>3</sup> this *Permādi* is represented to be a vassal of *Jagadekamalla II*, whose dates range between A. D. 1138 and 1150. While the former was in power as *Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara* in the seventh year of *Jagadekamalla*, i. e., in A. D. 1144, a certain grant was made by a body of sellers of betel leaves and nuts. The *Kulaśekharaṅka*, mentioned as being vanquished by this *Permādi*, must be a prince reigning on the western coast, as the others, *Jayakeśin*, the *Kadamba* prince of *Goa*, the *Hoysala* king, and so forth, were. Putting this statement and the quotation from the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* together, it appears highly probable that the *Ālvār* *Kulaśekhara* lived in the first half of the twelfth century. The sequence, therefore, given above cannot be implicitly believed in.

Still it may be admitted that the earliest *Ālvārs* flourished about the time of the revival of *Brāhmaṇism* and *Hinduism* in the North, which extended up to the *Maratha* country, as we have shown from Inscriptions and antiquarian remains, and must have extended still farther to the South. The earliest *Ālvārs* may be placed before about the fifth or sixth century, but there is nothing to show that *Vaiṣṇavism* had not penetrated to the *Tamil* country earlier, i. e., about the first century. But an impetus, such as the rise of the *Ālvārs* indicates, could in all probability come only from the energy of the revival. The hostile relations into which the *Ālvārs* and the *Śaiva* saints, *Nāyanmāras*, came with the *Buddhists* and *Jainas*, lend support to the view we have advocated.

The *Ālvārs* composed mostly in *Tamil*, what are called *Prabandhas* or songs in praise of the deity full of piety and devotion and

1 *Kāyena vācāmanasendriyaiḥ vā*, etc.

2 *JBBRAS*, Vol. XI. p. 244.

3 *Ibid.* p. 251.